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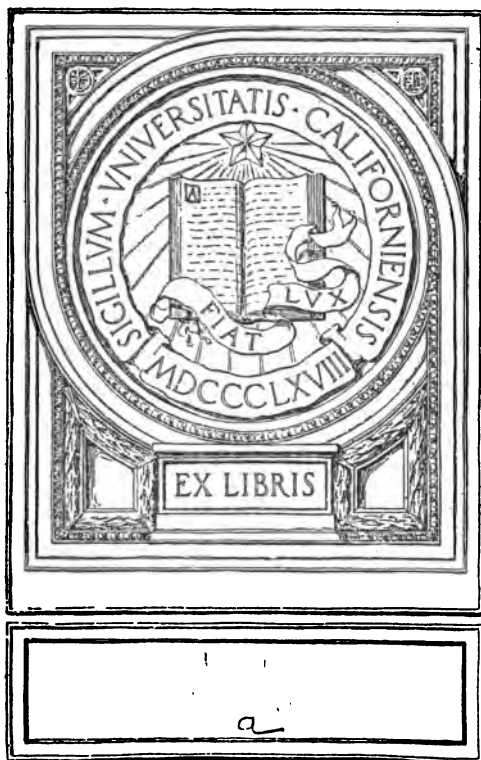
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# ADAM OF DUBLIN

A ROMANCE OF TO-DAY

*by*

CONAL O'RIORDAN

('NORREYS CONNELL')

AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM



NEW YORK

HARCOURT, BRACE AND HOWE

1920



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## TO JANE

MY DEAR JANE,—Your name shall not be set forth at the head of this page lest you should blush to find it coupled in the public mind with my book. Yet there is in it nothing more shocking than has happened in my own life, and you have told me (though indeed I took this to be courtesy rather than the expression of your sober opinion) you could not think of yourself ever being shocked by me.

It is the essential of a figure in art that it should be the common measure of many figures in life, and yet be unmistakably itself. Jack Falstaff is not Tom Jones, nor Arthur Pendennis, nor Mr. Britling: withal, these too true portraits of English gentlemen have a little Falstaff in them. All but the very few who know me may take it that Adam is in a sense myself. He is not. But I remember 'when that I was an a little tiny boy,' looking through my nursery window upon such another little boy, only in rags, across the street, and unsettling my nurse's religion by demanding which of the two was really I. Since then I have often asked myself whether this other boy, so well remembered as he sprawled, wistfully, animal like on his hard doorstep, was not my *alter ego* and perhaps Adam of Dublin's physical procreator as I am his spiritual begetter.

However that may be, Adam, albeit launched into

life in a more sordid environment than that in which I first remember to have found myself, was a better and even more fortunate child than I, besides enjoying the inestimable advantage of being born a generation later in this our time. To this you will perhaps demur; for you have hinted to me that Old Times were Best. With this I profoundly disagree: I despise that miserable year seven centuries since, when your forbears built their castle in a certain windy corner of Ireland, the more efficiently to cut the throats of mine. . . . I devotedly admire the good year 1919, when that pettifogging business the Great War was wound up, and I kissed your hand, and you put roses through my letterbox in a London suburb.

And so, whether you value the gift or not, I offer you this picture of the life of the world to-day, as it is reflected in that facet of the Universe, the Capital of our own country.

For Adam, I admonish you, is a universal figure, if not of the present, then of the future: if that were not my conviction, he had not escaped Father Tudor nor the waters that drowned Fan Tweedy.

Believe me to be,

My dear Jane,

Your very obedient, humble servant,

LONDON,

CONAL O'RIORDAN,

19th March, 1920.

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**ADAM OF DUBLIN**

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## CHAPTER I

### IN THE SHADOW OF THE PRO-CATHEDRAL

IN the capital of what is believed by many to be the fairest, if not the most extensive kingdom of Europe, and it may not be concealed from the reader, is Ireland, there lived not so long ago a tailor named Macfadden. He enjoyed the distinction of being perhaps the tallest and almost certainly the thirstiest of his trade in Dublin; but it is doubtful if he were one of the best. His profits, had he devoted them to that end (which he did not), were barely sufficient to provide for himself, his wife, and a son with whom he had been, somewhat unexpectedly blessed. This son was duly christened, at the Pro-Cathedral, that architectural hybrid of Athens and Rome, which is dedicated to St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, and is the commanding feature in the decorative scheme of Marlborough Street and the adjacent stews. He was given the names of Adam Byron O'Toole Dudley Wyndham and Innocent, to add to that of Macfadden. His godfather, Mr. Byron O'Toole, an acquaintance of Mrs. Macfadden's, boasting ancient if obscure descent, had linked with his own name those of one or two Englishmen of blood, whose intimacy he had enjoyed when, as an extra waiter, he had frequented the Castle. His godmother, Miss or Mrs. Robinson, an



#### 4 ADAM OF DUBLIN

acquaintance of Mr. O'Toole's (Mrs. Macfadden having no lady friend worthy of the name) had suggested that he be called Innocent, after her spiritual adviser, Father Innocent Feeley; and Mr. Macfadden insisted on the precedence of his own choice, Adam.

Adam was the name of one of Mr. Macfadden's, scandal said, too famous brothers; who, having gone to Africa as a private in the army, to be heard of by his relatives no more, was believed by Mr. Malachy Macfadden, the tailor, to have amassed a large fortune. "If the truth was known now," he would say, "I wouldn't wonder now if my brother Adam wasn't Dr. Jim or Eckstein, or it might be old Rhodes itself. . . . D'ye mind that million pounds, or whatever it was now, that Rhodes gave Parnell for the Party? That was my brother Adam all over. He was always a . . ." and here followed a rough and ready estimate of his brother's intellect.

The Macfaddens, as will be understood, were pious people; and they lived under the shadow of the sacred fane where their son had made his first appearance in Irish society. Mr. O'Toole dwelt in the immediate neighborhood: previous to the birth of our hero he had been the tenant of a cozy corner in the apartment of the Macfaddens: thence he moved to a house where dwelt the infant's godmother. It would not advantage the reader to indicate more precisely the spot, as the names of these streets are, by the whim of contending authorities, frequently changed, and you may go to bed in Orange Street to wake up in Green. Let us say that the Macfadden domain lay in an alley off the commercial artery

called by some such name as Count Street, where a great business was done by the trams carrying people anxious to get away from it; while more to the north and east lay Mr. O'Toole and Miss or Mrs. Robinson, in one of a group of houses to which we may give the name of Mountjoy Court. Mr. O'Toole preferred Mountjoy Court to Count Street; partly because it was more grandiosely planned, if in worse repair, and partly because it had once been the residence of a nobleman, and was actually still occasionally visited by members of the aristocracy.

Despite the piety of his parents, who were not so mean spirited as to spoil their child by a parsimonious administration of the porter bottle that served them for a rod, young Adam B. O'T. D. W. I. Macfadden had not turned out a credit to them. He had the aspect of one who, from the beginning, had been neglected by his mother and altogether escaped the notice, the favorable notice, of his father. Even by the standard of Marlborough Street, he was a dirty child: though it would be unjust to suggest that Mr. Macfadden used upon his own person that share of soap and water due to his son: nor did Mrs. Macfadden's comparative cleanliness throw any luster on her reputation in Count Street, where that quality was regarded as remote from, or even perhaps hostile to Godliness.

It was not Adam's bituminous coloring that troubled the hearts of his parents: it was his dissolute and untrustworthy character. When he had passed the age of seven years, at which it is reasonable for a young

man to support his parents, he was barely able to do more than keep his father in tobacco and provide for his own expensive maintenance, by the profits from the sale of extinct evening papers to those too charitable, too phlegmatic, or too slow of foot, to resent effectively the transaction. His father more particularly was aggrieved that the boy seldom accounted at home for a larger sum of money than was represented by the face value of the articles he had sold. Returning one evening, with a bottle of porter from his club, he took him severely to task: "Now I seen you myself with my own eyes, so there's no mistake now, there in O'Connell Street it was now, outside the Gresham Hotel I saw you, with my own eyes, selling the *Telegram* . . ."

"*Telegraph*," interjected the young hopeful, foolishly desirous of a precision hateful to his elder's soul.

"*Telemiyelbo*," returned Mr. Macfadden fiercely: "will you tell me I didn't see it with my own eyes?"

"What the hell did you see?" inquired Mrs. Macfadden, who sometimes betrayed impatience in the home circle.

"I seen him sell a *Telegram* to Father Muldoon himself. And you needn't tell me now that a grand man like that, the head of the Jesuits he is, and a friend of Murphy's, would give you no more than a halfpenny for the love of God."

"He gave me nothing at all," said Adam.

Indignation carried Mr. Macfadden's voice an octave upwards: "Will you tell me that the holy man would go and cheat an innocent child for the sake of a copper

or two?" . . . As Adam contumaciously held his opinion on this subject to himself, his elder roared "Now didn't I see you put the paper in his holy hand?"

"He gave it back to me," was the child's perplexing answer.

But Mr. Macfadden seldom allowed himself to be perplexed: "I thought it was your own fault," he snorted, "letting him see what it was before he paid you for it."

"Did his reverence make no excuse for not buying it after he'd asked for it?" Mrs. Macfadden inquired searchingly.

"No," said Adam. "He just told me to run home and tell me parients not to send me out swindling people any more."

"Impident old scuf!" cried Mr. Macfadden, and emptied the porter bottle. "If I ever catch you selling him anything again, I warn you now I'll cut your back. Bringing disgrace on us all with your foolishness, I call it."

Mrs. Macfadden eyed her husband without respect: "Sure, how could his reverence tell where the lad came from?"

The tailor rounded on her: "And now why couldn't he tell as well as I could or any one else? You'd think that just because he was a holy father with a tall hat on him, he was too grand to know anything. . . . Now what d'ye think he's there and paid for if it isn't to give his money to them that deserves it? . . . And there he goes now behaving like and worse than any old Prodestan

that never heard the name of Christian charity." . . . He turned to Adam: "Did you ever know a Prodestan itself to do the like of that?"

"I never gave them the chance," said Adam, with a reckless air; but his mother noticed his gray face tinge with ruddy brick.

"There, there," said she, "don't you be putting ideas into the boy's head, or we'll be having him prostutelized on us one of these fine days."

"Don't provoke me, woman," shouted Mr. Macfadden, clutching the porter bottle, "with your letting on to think that a son of mine would ever go and be a bloody turncoat."

"I never said he was a son of yours," returned Mrs. Macfadden, and the conversation took a direction in which Adam Byron O'Toole Dudley Wyndham Innocent was not called upon to follow it.

He willingly retired into that corner of the room once tenanted by his godfather, where now lay the cunning arrangement of old sacks, disused garments, and refuse from his own and his father's stock-in-trade, which served him, as it might a pig, for a bed. There he lay and fitfully slumbered while the controversy between his parents raged high and low. He was used to these debates and had lost interest in them even when he himself furnished the basis of discussion. He knew that his mother, despite her shortness of temper, had certain amiable qualities which would ensure her an eventual peace without crushing defeat, or even with moral victory.

And to-night as always within his experience, he heard Mr. and Mrs. Macfadden finish their conversation cozily in bed. "It's all very well for you, my love," said she, "to laugh at me for being silly. But I'd die of shame if he was got hold of by Lady Bland. Father Innocent told Emily Robinson that she was the worst woman in Dublin."

"Lady Blandmiyelbo!" returned Mr. Macfadden, with homely affability, and the report of a hearty kiss signaled to Adam that the family equilibrium was for the moment restored. So, like the good little Catholic he had learned to proclaim himself to a musical accompaniment every Sunday in the Pro-Cathedral, he said a short prayer to the Blessed Virgin, to protect him that night and for ever after from the machinations of the unspeakable Lady Bland.

He then went to sleep and dreamed that her ladyship was something between a unicorn and a road-roller, with several tails, to each of which was tied a flaming sardinetin, and as many heads, crowned by helmets of that fashion affected by the Dublin Metropolitan Police. Her ladyship had run him down in Mountjoy Court, and, obsequiously assisted by Mr. O'Toole, was about to put him into one, or perhaps more, of the sardinetins, when he woke with a scream, was soundly chastised by Mr. Macfadden with the fortunately convenient porter bottle; and, after he had recovered from the shock, fell into a peaceful and refreshing slumber.

So far, he had an easy conscience; but already he

knew that not it, nor even the intercession of Holy Mary ever Virgin, could protect him from evil dreams. And again he had dreams he deemed sublime, though he knew not that word nor waking, could recall what were these wonderful things he dreamed.

## CHAPTER II

### HOW ADAM EMBRACED THE CAREER OF JOURNALISM

ADAM MACFADDEN, when his unworthiness to be their offspring was not too severely brought home to him by his good parents, usually slept well. Even at eight years old, as has been shown, his failings as a son and as a citizen did not unduly trouble his conscience. He had known a time when the other merchants of evening papers had made a parade of warning the public against his wares, as being of an outmoded character, but he suspected this outcry, which often took an ill-natured form, to spring from a spirit of rivalry rather than a true concern for the commonweal. Thus they had no hesitation in demanding high premiums for their journals under the color of their containing matter which the editors had failed to insert; while Adam never cried any news not actually to be found in his paper, and having the historic past to draw upon, he was careful to offer no sheet for sale which did not contain something of more than passing interest. He dinned again and again into the ears of a forgetful people the melancholy tidings of the decease of Queen Victoria, or the epoch marking news of the relief of Mafeking. For many years after their first production these attractions held a secure place in Adam's repertory; not until all his stock



treating of them was exhausted, were they finally withdrawn.

The happy thought of specializing in good and interesting, as apart from merely fresh, news had not, we must confess, originated with Adam himself; nor had he to thank his parents for it. Mr. Macfadden was not so much a man of literary taste as a realist in his ideas: he would have preferred to see Adam employed in connection with almost any one of the public-houses between Nelson's Pillar and Amiens Street Station; for he believed that, with application, a lad starting thus might easily rise to be proprietor of Guinness's Brewery. Mrs. Macfadden was, however, obstinately opposed to this scheme, which, for the rest, Mr. Macfadden had not sufficient influence to put into execution by himself. He appealed to Mr. O'Toole, whose opinion he knew to weigh heavily in his family circle, enjoying as he did the entrée everywhere.

"I'd be the last one in the world to come between man and wife," said the judicious Mr. O'Toole. "But if the lad were a lad of mine—which he is not—I'd be sorry to see him trapezing around the pubs of Count Street when he might be associating with the gentry in Stephen's Green."

"Is it Saint Stephen's Green?" protested Mr. Macfadden, with little faith. "And what gentry would be associating with him there, unless the ducks and drakes in the muddy pond?"

"Have you never heard tell of the Shelbourne Hotel?" asked Mr. O'Toole, not without hauteur.

"Shelbournemiyelbo!" said Mr. Macfadden, which was understood by his interlocutor to convey a more or less emphatic affirmative.

"Well, then," Mr. O'Toole said easily: "the Shelbourne Hotel—that's the place for him to go."

"To be a potboy there, is it?" Mr. Macfadden inquired, overcome by a sudden delusion of grandeur.

Mr. O'Toole recalled him to the drab facts of life: "To use your own elegant vocabulary, the word is pot-boymiyelbo," said he. "D'ye expect your little snot of a son to begin at the top of the tree? . . . You'll find that like the best and bravest of us he'll have to climb the ladder from the bottom of the page."

"Ah, what are you talking about?" broke in Mrs. Macfadden: "I'll not have a son of mine wearin' buttons and maybe waiting on Prodestans."

"Faith if he did wear buttons his appearance might be the more respectable," replied Mr. O'Toole. "And isn't his lordship's grace the Lord Lieutenant a Protestant?"

"The Lord Mayor's a Catholic," returned Mr. Macfadden, with a pride that was at once municipal and religious.

Young Adam and even his mother felt that he had here scored a debating point, but Mr. O'Toole brushed his argument contemptuously aside: "Would you compare that old plumber, Tim Horlock, that might be stuck with his nose up your drain pipe this very moment, if he wasn't an Ancient Hibernian, with the Honorable Lord Marquis of Letchworth that has

more pounds in his pocket than Tim has hair on his calves?"

"A marquis you might say is almost more than a duke," Mr. Macfadden admitted: "I won't say whether I wouldn't mind Adam waiting on the Marquis of Letchworth."

"Nobody axed you," said Mr. O'Toole. "And if you think his lordship would demean himself to be found dead at the Shelbourne Hotel you're mighty mistaken."

"Arrah then what are you talking about?" Mr. Macfadden grumbled. He found Mr. O'Toole's train of thought altogether too bewildering. "If the Shelbourne Hotel isn't a place for a gentleman, no son of mine will be going there."

"Will you hold your gob and let Mr. O'Toole hear himself talk?" suggested Mrs. Macfadden.

"If you insist on my advice, it's this," said the courtier. "Let the boy get a sheaf of evening papers, not *Telegraphs*, mind you, which only Cat'lics ever look at, but the *Mail*, which is the paper of the aristocracy, and the *Herald* which does thrim both ways, and go and learn good manners selling them to the society coming in and out of the Shelbourne Hotel and the clubs contagious to the same."

"Where would I get a sheaf of papers?" Mr. Macfadden cried, "that can't even get a bit of stuff for myself with all them Jew emporiums cutting the room from under my head. And if I did I'm told there isn't fifty per cent to be made out of any newspaper in Ireland."

"How does Murphy do it?" asked Mrs. Macfadden.

"That's not the papers only," her husband explained; "'tis the thrams and Clery's and the papers altogether. Says the *Herald*: 'Go to Clery's' and the thrams are waiting there to take them to Clery's, and so to Clery's they go and spend all their money, and 'tis Murphy has it, bad luck to him."

"The crawling snake," commented Mrs. Macfadden; "not, mind you, but I'd like to be Mrs. Murphy."

"Maybe you're as good as her if all was known," said Mr. Macfadden darkly; "but that won't buy us the sheaf of papers; for I'm no millionaire."

"You can buy them for less than giving away if you know where to go for them," Mr. O'Toole informed them.

"Where would that be?" asked Mr. Macfadden, respectful in the presence of a trade secret.

"You leave that to me," replied Mr. O'Toole, enjoying his vantage ground and cocking his eye unperceived at Mrs. Macfadden.

She threw him an admiring glance: "I know what he means," said she. "The old waste paper that grand people get rid of in dread of the bugs and the butchers buy to wrap sausages."

"You've put it in words I would not use myself," said Mr. O'Toole, "but your woman's wit has fathomed my meaning."

"I was afraid you were after burglary," Mr. Macfadden confessed. "And that's a thing I wouldn't hear of, even if there was money in it, which there is not. But of course if you find the goods, I don't mind saying

that I've nothing against Adam handling them as your agent, me having no responsibility beyond seeing that he doesn't spend the money, supposing there is any, and you'll excuse me for doubting it, on himself."

"Done," said Mr. O'Toole. "There's a bargain now, and we'll have a drop all round." As despite his hearty tone, he did not offer to provide it, Mrs. Macfadden produced a bottle from under the mattress.

"The blessing of God on it," responded Mr. Macfadden, adding, as an afterthought: "But I'm thinking it's not the Shelbourne Hotel but to Richmond Asylum you will have to go to find any one fool enough to buy the same old paper over and over again."

Mr. O'Toole turned sarcastically to Mrs. Macfadden: "Himself has a want of imagination must be a sad trial to you," said he.

Mrs. Macfadden shrugged her shoulders, murmuring: "I've worse to put up with than that." And Adam wondered why his mother winked across her tumbler at his superb godfather.

Mr. Macfadden's hand crashed down upon the table: "Imaginemiyelbo! Would any one but a lunatic jackass born and bred be contented to pay a halfpenny every day of his life to read about the assassination of King Brian Boru?"

"And why not?" returned Mr. O'Toole condescendingly. "It's not every one has ever heard of King Brian Boru. You've got to think of the man in the street. He doesn't know one king from another, but he's an edjicated man for all that, and when his day's work is done

he doesn't grudge a copper for a bloody murder to read for company going home in the tram."

Mr. Macfadden was shaken but not convinced. "I'd have thought even the common people would have heard of Brian Boru and Strongbow knifing him on Easter Bank Holiday down there at Clontarf."

Mrs. Macfadden shuddered: "I never could bear the name of that Strongbow," she protested, "because of a Corporal Strongbow in the Royal Dragoon Guards that threatened me with his bayonet for marrying Mr. Macfadden."

"It was a quare Dragoon Guard that carried a bayonet on him," sniggered Mr. O'Toole, annoyed at her talking of other things while he held the floor and had an eye to business.

"God forgive me for telling you a lie," said Mrs. Macfadden hastily: "his name was Barlow and he was a sergeant in the R.I.C." She concluded with emphasis: "I'm sure I don't know why I didn't marry them—they were both grand matches."

"Matchmi——" commenced Mr. Macfadden, when a small shrill voice interposed: "'Twasn't Strongbow killed Brian Boru."

The next moment Mr. Macfadden landed his son and heir through the doorway by the ear. "Run and play at the end of the corner," he admonished, "and don't come back until you hear us stop talking."

"That lad might do well if you can keep him from telling the truth," volunteered Mr. O'Toole, tactfully leading them back to the business in hand with this

complimentary phrase. "But you'll have to wash him with dog soap so the old ladies can kiss him without dread of a stroke."

"Can't they buy his papers without smelling at him?" growled Mr. Macfadden.

"I doubt if they could if they had the use of their senses," said Mr. O'Toole.

"Many a time I've washed him myself when he was a child," Mrs. Macfadden said with a sigh. "But it was never any use. He'd be as black as the pot before the day was out. And now he's getting too big for it."

Mr. Macfadden straightened himself with a determined air, and a big and masterful fellow he looked as he proclaimed: "I'm not the man to stop at washing him myself if there's any money in it."

"That's the way I like to hear you," Mr. O'Toole responded. "Nothing venture, nothing win. Do you give him a bit of an ablution with the scrubbing brush, if you have such a thing, and maybe put a stitch in his trousers if you've nothing else to do, while I see about getting the papers. And don't you be afraid of his being able to buzz them off all right. There's the grand racing at Epsom beyond this week, and if ye give an English officer coming out of the Sheridan Club a Late Buff with a headline, 'Favorite wins the Derby,' d'ye think he'd ever have the sense to find out that the baste was long ago gone foreign and the father of a family in South America?"

"Thru for you," Mr. Macfadden agreed, this time without reserve. "Them officers would give the world

to hear anything agreeable since the Boer War. And it's doing them a kindness to tell them a lie." He rolled up his sleeve: "Just tell Adam to step up here to me now if you see him round the corner, and with the blessing of God I'll begin on him now."

"You can't start too soon," said Mr. O'Toole, taking his leave.

"I'll lend you a bit of soap," Mrs. Macfadden volunteered, electrified by her husband's display of energy. And so through a foam of blinding, biting suds, Adam found himself abruptly launched upon the seas of journalism.



## CHAPTER III

### ADAM CRIES OLD NEWS IN STEPHEN'S GREEN

NOTWITHSTANDING the confidence expressed in him by his accomplished godfather, Adam made but a modest beginning in the world of polite literature. The first day he adventured into Stephen's Green he had offered a *Mail* to an old gentleman in a white hat, who took it, opened it, and instantly fell upon him, pummeling him blindly until he lay down and screamed murder, and then, lifting him in panic at the gathering crowd, had placed half a crown in his hand and bolted. Adam, better accustomed to kicks than halfpence, thereupon hurried home in triumph to his family, who for the nonce took him to their bosoms.

"That's grand now, that's grand," chuckled Mr. Macfadden. "Half a crown in one day, that's fourteen shillings and seven sixpences every week, if you count Sundays, which you cannot; and the best of it is there's only one paper gone, so if you'd had the sense to sell the lot you might say you'd have made a fortune." Such was the language held by Mr. Macfadden to encourage his son on his start in life.

To Mr. O'Toole, whom he sought out a little later at Mountjoy Court, he described the transaction more soberly: "I won't deny there's a lot in that notion of

yours if Adam had the gis to carry it through," he said in a tone of deferential criticism; "but it wants a mighty lot of gis for so young a lad." He paused as though to take breath, and waited for Mr. O'Toole to say something. But Mr. O'Toole said nothing.

Miss or Mrs. Robinson, who happened to be present, ventured to inquire what had happened.

"What indeed!" said Mr. Macfadden, "why the poor lad had only sold one *Mail*, I think it was, when he got a fall sent him home to his mother. And not to rob you now," he said to Mr. O'Toole, "there's your half of the profit." He tendered him a farthing.

"Put it you know where," quoth Mr. O'Toole in a supercilious tone he handled effectively with persons more sensitive than Mr. Macfadden, "and tell that young sniveler that if he can't show a bit of spunk I wash my hands of him."

Mr. Macfadden did not think it his cue to defend Adam's physical courage; but Miss or Mrs. Robinson spoke up for him: "My godson's no sniveler, but as brave as a lion and how do you know a tram didn't run over him to make him give in?"

Mr. O'Toole rolled a bilious eye upon her by way of answer, and it was left to Mr. Macfadden to carry on the conversation: "I didn't stop to hear whether it was a thram happened to him or not," he explained. "My one thought was to bring Mr. O'Toole his due without troubling him to call for it. But soon I hope he'll be starting work again."

"Jesus, Mary, and Joseph grant it!" said the god-

mother, with the perfect faith which illuminated her monotonous life.

"Anyhow tell him," said Mr. O'Toole, "he needn't look to me to do any more for him till he shows himself deserving of it."

"Ah, don't be hard on the innocent child," pleaded the godmother, "or maybe you'll drive him to destroy himself off Butt Bridge as you did Fan Tweedy by asking too much of her."

Again Mr. O'Toole answered her with only his eyes; but the visitor fired up with virtuous indignation: "I'll trouble you not to couple a son of mine with the like of Fan Tweedy."

Whereupon Miss or Mrs. Robinson fell into hysterics and Mr. O'Toole expressed a firmly worded desire for him to withdraw; which he did with a still highly offended manner, implying that he would be slow to call upon Mr. O'Toole again. But outside the door and descending the handsomely welled staircase, with the caution necessary to bridge the gaps between the steps and compensate for the frequent intermissions in the handrail, a contented smile overspread his manly features: "Thanks be to God I've got rid of that fellow," said he.

Meanwhile, inside the room Mr. O'Toole waited without any show of impatience for Miss or Mrs. Robinson to recover her right mind. Then he said: "I wish you'd have the sense to hold your tongue when I've a black-guard like Macfadden to deal with."

"I don't care what you say to Mr. Macfadden," she

answered wistfully, "but I can't stand you of all people abusing little Adam."

Mr. O'Toole gave her the benefit of his supercilious smile: "What harm does it do him?" he asked in a tone that desired no answer. "I only do it to annoy Macfadden and keep him in his place. If I was to abuse him to his face he'd up and hit me. But what bothers me is he's so conceited he'll go to his grave and never see the joke at the bottom of the whole thing."

"If he ever does . . ." she shivered.

Mr. O'Toole continued to smile: "He never will. She'll never have the pluck to tell him and if she did he wouldn't believe her. There's not a greater coxcomb in Grafton Street than dirty old humbugging, bullying, swindling Malachy Macfadden."

The object of Mr. O'Toole's criticism wore a serious cast of countenance when he reached home to tell Mrs. Macfadden: "O'Toole says your son's a good-for-nothing young stinkpot, and it'll be for you to get the papers for him from this time forward."

Mrs. Macfadden bristled: "It's not the first time he's fouled his own nest," she declared, "and Emily Robinson could tell you where he finds the money to do it and despise us. But I'll show him that my son is as good as his father if I have to beg my bread from door to door."

"I don't see why you're dragging me into it," said Mr. Macfadden, knitting his black brows; "and there's no call for you to go begging your bread when there's this enormous profit to be made in the paper trade. 'Tis

for all the world like the Debeer mine my brother made his fortune in, and I'm thinking I done well to call my son Adam."

"Ah, go on to blazes," said Mrs. Macfadden, venting upon her husband the ill-humor aroused by the tale of the misconduct of Mr. O'Toole. She had long since ceased to follow the supposititious career of Mr. Macfadden's brother, though his name had figured largely in the marriage settlements, verbal in form, which the happy bridegroom had made upon her. Mr. O'Toole, who with all his well-bred features, gracefully curved whiskers, and generously colored nose, was notoriously cynical of heart, was the first person to throw doubt on the achievements of Brother Adam, in whose reflected glory Count Alley had been quite content that Mr. Macfadden should bathe; most families having Brother Adams of their own, whose conquests in the New World were called in to redress their defeats in the old.

Mr. O'Toole, falling into the common error of higher critics, had tried to prove too much, to wit: that Mr. Macfadden never had a brother at all beyond two that were hanged; whereupon Mr. Macfadden produced a cloud of witness that at least eleven had died in infancy. Furthermore, an elderly and well-to-do widow of the name of Arnott (for whom even Mr. O'Toole felt instinctive respect when presented to her at Mooney's in Great Britain or Parnell Street) testified to the embarkation of the elder Adam on board the troopship *Assistance* at the Victoria Jetty, Kingstown. "I can't tell you when

it was," she admitted, "for you wouldn't think it polite of me to tell you my age, though every one knows it is twenty-nine, but I remember Adam as if it was only yesterday kissing me good-by with the band playing 'The Girl I Left Behind Me' and his big foreign service helmet battering the bridge of my nose. It was great sauce of him, for I was no more than a flapper as the medicals say, but I thought no harm of it, for he was the humbuggingest fellow I ever laid eyes on, though not so handsome as his brother Aloysius that was hung! no, nor even poor Mrs. Malachy's husband here, but there wasn't a girl I knew in Dublin that didn't love every bit of him. And the next thing I heard of him was that King Catsupawayo had ate himself and two companies of the old Twenty-fourth, and I cried my eyes out so that I couldn't go near Dan Lowry's that night, which was the fashionable place then that the Hippodrome is now."

"Ye needn't have distressed yourself, mam," said Mr. Macfadden stoutly. "It was all my eye about Catsupmiyelbo, and my brother's alive and well to this day and never better. I don't know how long ago I had a post card from him, saying he was near the richest man in Africa, and was sending me a postal order if he had the time."

"Well, you do hear a lot of lies," the widow readily admitted, "and the gentleman who told me was an officer in the Dublin Militia I wouldn't thrust farther than I could see. If Adam's doing well you might give him my love and ask him if he remembers the bridge of my nose."

So the objectivity of the elder Adam's existence was vindicated, but Mr. O'Toole merely smiled and protested that Mrs. Arnott was a tactful, witty, and amusing lady, and there was little to remove from Mrs. Macfadden's mind the seeds of suspicion which, were his intentions good or bad, he had planted there. Their germination proved fatal to the never idyllic peace of her married life. The stalwart and most unsartorial tailor who, though several years her senior, appeared to be not without romance when considered as the brother of a South-African millionaire, lost all charm as member of a family of whom approximately a dozen had perished without distinction, two been hanged in circumstances of little interest, and one might or might not have been devoured by a foreign prince no longer regnant, but certainly, so far as she was concerned, had come to no good. Perhaps Mrs. Macfadden never came to love any man more than her husband, but she took more pleasure in Mr. O'Toole's conversation. Nevertheless she resented an affront from him she might not have noticed from her husband, and she was resolved that her son's business should not be ruined by his godfather's apathy. So she went to work to procure the papers for him.

And so far as quantity went, Adam lacked nothing. But the quality was not equal to Mr. O'Toole's. If Mrs. Macfadden saw a pile of fresh-looking papers anywhere, she would beg them for her son to sell; and kind people, anxious to be rid of lumber, would not refuse her. With one such antiquated batch Adam had a thrilling

experience. They were *Telegraphs* found by his mother on an unattended barrow in Mountjoy Square and annexed by her as being probably of less value to the owner than to her; and, though Adam deemed the news in them of interest, they found at first no sale. He read in them of the death of an Irish baronet in Africa, where his own uncle had disappeared: and the baronet, like his uncle, had been a soldier. But in the baronet's case there had been a battle: after the battle there had been no baronet. Adam could not make out what had happened to him, and suspected diabolic agency, the gallant gentleman had so completely disappeared. Either his enemies had found time to devour him in the heat of action or the devil had him surely. Whatever his fate, it made grand news to cry, and what with the papers containing it looking still so clean, he wondered why none would buy. Vainly he walked up and down in front of the hotel, and even all along the north and east sides of Stephen's Green, calling: "Battle in the Soudan: Baronet killed in Kordofan: Death of Sir David Byron-Quinn." Futile was his own variation on the theme: "Awful death of Irish Baronet. Bloody end to Sir David Byron-Quinn." None but himself showed any interest in the baronet: and he only, perhaps, in that his name was Byron, like his godfather's.

Wearying of his effort to rouse attention, his mind had wandered to thoughts of home, to which only the dread of his reception withheld him from returning, though his voice kept mechanically shrilling: "Shocking slaughter in the Soudan: Baronet killed in Kordofan."



Death of Sir David Byron-Quinn!" when he noticed the door of a house on the east side of the Green open and a woman appear pushing a bicycle, on which she mounted and pedaled towards him. She was not a young woman, but he thought her at first glance a beautiful and distinguished lady, riding there, masterfully contemptuous of cars and cabs: refusing to give way even to one of Mr. Murphy's trams, which perforce must stop to let her pass. Adam admired her until, catching her eye as she drew near, he noticed in it a wildness that was not alluring, and that her whole appearance was not merely haggard but tousled and unkempt in a way he reckoned did not become a lady. He was still conscious of attraction, but he was not attracted by her as by his godmother, who was his standard of female beauty. . . . This lady in no way resembled the Blessed Virgin. . . . Yet her eye still held his as he screamed at her, scenting at last a possible purchaser: "Bloody end to Sir David Byron-Quinn!"

He was petrified by her leaping off her bicycle to cry in his ear: "Are you mad, or has the Castle paid you to insult me?" . . .

What followed, Adam was too startled to realize: he only knew that the lady retired to the house in Stephen's Green with his papers under her arm, while he found himself dancing home down Kildare Street with a dizzily light heart and another precious half-crown clasped in his hand.

Never again had he such a harvest as this, and not for years did he solve the puzzle of it. . . . But, on

the whole, he did pretty well with his papers, considering that he had not his judicious godfather to pick and choose them for him. In the fifth week of this commerce Mr. O'Toole somewhat inconsiderately appeared and demanded a balance sheet. The proposal was coldly received. Mrs. Macfadden was for temporizing, and even the payment of a modest lump sum to purchase his goodwill. But the head of the house would not hear of this. He merely said, "Lumpmiyelbo!" and knocked him downstairs.

Thence Mr. Byron O'Toole arose and, in annoyance forgetting all forms of diplomacy, bawled his intention of invoking the aid of the law; thereby causing an impromptu reunion of the local *dilettanti* at the door of the house. But on Mr. Macfadden indicating the line of defense on which he relied, and, though not clearly connected with the business in hand, was considered by a majority of those present to put Mr. O'Toole in the wrong, the latter retired without resorting to extremities. So Mr. Macfadden claimed the victory; but his wife criticised, as severely as she dared when he was in fighting trim, his lack of vision.

No more was heard of Mr. O'Toole for some time to come; but when Adam next took up his place by the Shelbourne Hotel he was warned off by the porter and driven across Kildare Street. And two days after that, striving to establish himself outside one of the clubs nearer Grafton Street, he was challenged by a constable, who demanded a sight of his wares. Though conscious of no guilt, he turned a deaf ear and fled down Dawson

Street, only to run into the arms of an inspector, who cuffed him with a professional cunning that put to shame the mere heavy-handed violence of his father, and confiscated his whole stock. St. Stephen's Green was no longer tenable.

"You done wrong to quarrel with O'Toole!" Mrs. Macfadden had a proper pleasure in telling her husband, commenting on this catastrophe: "I warned you that he had the Castle behind him."

"Castlemiyelbo!" was that strong man's undaunted answer. "Rutland Squire's as good as Saint Stephen's Green any day, and maybe the Gresham Hotel is grander than the Shelbourne if the truth was known. . . . And talking of truth, there the Cat'lic Truth Company second next door to it you may say, where I'd feel a young lad like Adam would be a deal safer selling his papers outside of, than among that bastard O'Toole's fine Prodestan friends on the south side."

Mrs. Macfadden confessed there was much in this point. "I've been uneasy myself to think of him losing the faith which Father Innocent said in his sermon last Sunday, Emily Robinson told me, and she never loses a word he says, led more poor unfortunate people to the flames of hell than all the other sins in the world put together. She says he cried in the pulpit and would have had a fit if the administrator hadn't sent him word to hurry up as the bishop was having to catch the train to lunch at Blackrock."

"Father Innocent's a mollycoddling sort of chap to go crying in the chapel and wasting the bishop's time,"

said Mr. Macfadden. "But I've often told O'Toole, when he let on to be a man you could trust, that he'd be safer drinking fire and brimstone at the bottom of an earthquake than handing round claret-cup and oranges at the viceregal lodge." He turned his eyes upon his wife to add in the same religious tone: "He was a false fellow that O'Toole, and I wish you'd never laid eyes on him."

"I wish I never had," she answered readily, "but that was a grand idea of his about the papers all the same."

"It was that," Mr. Macfadden admitted. "But nothing more would have come of it only for me. And I was against the Shelbourne Hotel from the beginning."

Mrs. Macfadden, unless confronted by immediate visible danger, never allowed herself to be in the wrong. "It was good money, and he took no harm from it."

Mr. Macfadden indulged in a sardonic smile and cleared his throat portentously. "I wonder now, have you no eyes in your head?"

"No," replied Mrs. Macfadden. "What's the matter with you?"

"It's three days now Adam's been cleaner than he ever was before or since."

"I did see there was something the matter with him," said Mrs. Macfadden; "but I never thought to look what it was."

"I wasn't to be made a fool of so easy," Mr. Macfadden proclaimed. "I said to him straight, 'You came home yesterday with more soap on your face than you took out.' . . . 'If I did,' says he, 'I took none

out.' . . . 'Don't say another word,' says I, 'and keep nothing back or you'll never have another face to soap.' "

"And what did he say to that?" asked the anxious mother.

Mr. Macfadden's tone grew more and more impressive. "He told me how an old lady had sejuiced him to a house in Merrion or one of them grand squares beyond, and up and gave him a penny to take a bath."

"A bath indeed," repeated Mrs. Macfadden, deeply stirred. "That's how it always begins and it ends in them sending you to teach the Chinamen worse things than they know already."

"That's it surely," declared Mr. Macfadden. "I tell you we're well quit of Mr. O'Toole and his heathen grandees. In O'Connell Street I'll have the lad under the sight of my own eye, for it's round the corner, and if any old lady comes sejucin' him there I don't know what I'll do to her."

"You wouldn't," snapped Mrs. Macfadden, resenting his triumph. "And I'm troubled to think if there's any one in O'Connell Street rich enough to buy papers they don't want. And there's a power of Presbyterians between Frederick Street and the Pillar."

"If it's no good," concluded Mr. Macfadden, who, though it cannot be claimed for him that he cherished wisdom above all else, was what is commonly called a philosopher, "we can always try St. Stephen's Green again, later on."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE OLD LADY

**ALTHOUGH** Adam had told his father nothing that was not true concerning his adventure with the old lady, experience had taught him to allow no information to escape that was not elicited by a leading question. The interrogatory might be summarized thus:—

Why was he clean? Because he was washed.

Why was he washed? Because he had been in a queer sort of copper, using hot water and something that smelt like soap, only smellier.

Who put him in that vessel? Himself.

Why did he put himself therein? To earn a penny.

Who had offered to pay the penny? An old lady.

What old lady? An old lady in one of them squares.

What brought him to one of them squares? The old lady.

Did she bring him by force? No.

What means did she use to induce him to go? He could not say.

Then why did he go? He could not rightly say.

Would it be easier for him to be belted than to say?

No.

Then what made him go? The old lady mentioned

the possibility of good little boys earning pennies by being obedient to their betters.

Did she say anything else? Only blather.

Blather about what? About God being good to him.

Why did he call that blather? Because God was never good to him except when the Blessed Virgin asked Him.

As Mr. Macfadden could not clearly recall whether this was sound dogma, he did not venture to pursue the matter, but contented himself with solemnly admonishing his son that if the old lady accosted him again, he was not to go with her for less than threepence; and if she gave him any sort of book or printed matter he was to bring it home unopened to submit to the paternal censorship. Furthermore he was never on any account to mention the matter to his mother. This Adam was only too happy to promise; and to conceal the fact that he himself had divulged the secret to her, Mr. Macfadden decreed that the story should be buried in oblivion.

For twenty-four hours Mrs. Macfadden had it on the tip of her tongue; but after that it was forgotten in the bitterness of the estrangement from Mr. O'Toole. "It's not that I care the back of my hand for the fellow," she would say, "but not seeing him I can't see Emily Robinson neither."

"Emilyrobinsonmiyelbo," said Mr. Macfadden simply but with much expression.

But, though the story faded so fast from his parents' recollection, the adventure with the old lady marked

the ruddiest of letter days in little Adam's life: its memory was not the less thrilling for the hint of evil that underlay the fair surface. What had happened was this: In the duller moments of business, between luncheon and afternoon tea, he had wandered eastward from the Shelbourne Hotel, to refresh himself with a glance at the shop windows. He had not gone far when he saw a stout lady, active on her feet but no longer young, come bustling out of Gerrard the stationer's with several letters in her hand. Attempting to thrust them all together into the neighboring postal box, she let one drop. This Adam was quick to seize and return to her. He noticed that the address opened with the mysterious abbreviation, "Rt. Hon.," but not that he had left a brilliant impression of his right thumb beneath the stamp.

The stout lady looked from the boy to her letter and back again. "You're as dirty as you're polite," she said.

"Thank you, mam, and God bless you," replied Adam, who already knew in what form a conversation with the aristocracy had to be held.

The old lady emptied her lungs in a futile attempt to remove his identification mark from her letter. "There," she said, "I've done my best and I hope Judge Harrison will think it's the postman." She dropped the letter into the box.

"Yes, mam," said Adam, "and God bless you."

The old lady stayed to regard him sternly as she demanded: "How can you invoke God with such dirty hands?"



"I didn't mean to let a curse, mam," he said apologetically.

Her tone softened. "I didn't say you cursed, but you called on God twice in as many minutes, and without any seemly preparation. Now just think, child, that God might possibly hear you, might even condescend to turn His beautiful great eyes on you. Don't you think then He might see your dirty hands and strike you dead?"

"He might indeed, mam," agreed Adam, "if He had a mind to."

Her tone grew compassionate. "And tell me, my dear child, what would you do then?"

"I'd go to purgatory," he replied smartly, looking to her to be pleased with his response.

Far from it, she rejoined: "You poor benighted little guttersnipe, there is no such place."

Fortunately for the too zealous lady, Adam had learned to be master of his temper. "No, mam," answered he politely, but lest she should deem that he really agreed with her he added, "Sure anyhow doesn't God know all about my hands without bothering to look at them?"

"Do you think that's the answer I expect from you, when I'm doing my best?" the lady asked tartly.

"Yes, mam," said Adam, "and God bless you."

"And if I were dead," she said contemptuously, "I suppose you'd pray for me?"

"I would indeed, mam," Adam did not hesitate to

assure her, though this was scarcely more than politeness, "if I knew your name?"

"Then you don't know my name?" The lady did not dissemble her surprise.

"I don't indeed, mam," said Adam, "no more than you know mine."

Somewhat ruffled, she demanded his name and address, which he was at once alarmed and flattered to see her make a note of in a little black book she carried in a black velvet bag hanging over her arm.

"Now tell me, Andrew Macadam," said she, "do you truly believe, in your heart, that God commands you to be dirty?"

Adam guessed from the form of the question that she wished him to answer it in the negative, so he said winningly, "Indeed, mam, and I do not." He hoped he might now be suffered to depart, with or without reward.

But the lady's tone only warmed agreeably as she felt that she was at last gaining ground. "And do you yourself love to be dirty when you know that God does not command it?"

This was a difficult question for Adam satisfactorily to answer; for cleanliness was associated in his mind with savage onslaughts made upon him by his mother at long intervals, culminating in his father's assault and battery, from which his ears still tingled, so he said humbly, "Indeed, mam, I wouldn't like you to think that."

"Well, then," said the old lady, turning her determined

step in the direction of Baggot Street, "just walk along beside me here and tell me if you wouldn't wish to be clean."

Adam's heart fell; he looked longingly towards the Shelbourne Hotel, which vomited possible purchasers of his wares. But he knew not how to answer or excuse himself, so broken was he to obedience that he fell in beside her, uncertain that she might not smash her umbrella on him if he refused.

"So you think you'd like to be a nice clean little true Christian lad after all?" the lady said in her most fascinating tone, as she bowed to an acquaintance at the corner of Ely Place with an air of saying, "Look what I've got here."

Adam's spirits sunk lower beneath the weight of this triumphant glance; it reminded him of a fat old fox terrier he had once seen swallow without apparent effort a mouse: the mouse, he thought, had consented to its absorption and folded itself appropriately. . . . Was he not now in the same position as that mouse? . . . without venturing to flee (for, if the lady proved to be a witch that would be worse than useless), he dragged his steps: "Please, mam, I was only thinking I don't know where your ladyship would be taking me."

"My dear child," said the lady, "I'm only bringing you somewhere you can have a wash to make you more acceptable in the sight of our dear Lord."

Adam abruptly backed against the railings, and clenched his right hand, the left clutching his papers lest they be seized from him in the *melee*. "If any one

lays hands on me I'll break their gob," he blurted with a desperate valor he did not feel.

The lady, though scandalized, did not lose patience, indeed she patently grew in sanctity as she answered, "Come, my child, no one is going to lay hands on you. You will go into a beautiful room all by yourself where there is a nice bath, with delicious hot water, and as much cold as you like, and as much soap as you like . . ."

"I don't like soap," cried Adam. "My nose is destroyed with it."

"Perhaps some one laved you too roughly," said she. "Have you been in prison? surely not at your age?"

"I have not, mam," said Adam, interested in the question, "but I've heard tell that Kilmainham's the grand place."

"Well, anyhow," said the old lady, "you won't be afraid to soap yourself. You will be quite alone and no one will interfere with you in any way, and if I find you've made yourself clean enough for our dear Lord, I'll give you this. . . ." She held up a bright new penny.

Adam gazed at it and reflected on its being a possible possession for himself alone, not to be accounted for to his parents. Also he saw a policeman coming, who, he knew, would do anything the old lady bade him, so he parleyed, "And how long would it be taking me to earn that?" he asked.

"That depends on yourself," the old lady explained. "And how long you take to wash. I'll not detain you a minute, and my house is round the corner. . . ."

Come, now, that's a good boy, and remember you're not doing it for me, nor for yourself, but for our dear Lord, who died on a cross to save us all."

Adam made no effort to follow this argument, but jogged along beside her with the set expression of a gallows-bird determined to meet gamely his inevitable fate. Also he visualized bitter waters with a golden penny glittering on the other side.

He had already entered a world of which even the topography was new to him; for he had never ventured farther than Ely Place with his papers, and until he came a few days earlier to take up his profession in Stephen's Green, the whole south side of the city was a remote and foreign land.

He thought the lady had marched him quite a long way when she turned into a square not to be distinguished from Mountjoy on the north side but for the brightness of window-glass and door brasses and the predominance of automobiles and carriages above outside cars and cabs. She stopped at last by an area gateway, bade Adam to remain where he was, ascended six steps to the hall door, which, having rung the bell, she opened with a latchkey, and disappeared.

Adam looked around: here surely was a chance to escape; but his limbs did not respond to the suggestion of his brain: he was, as it were, anæsthetized by a delicious odor which rose from the area below. Some one in that mysterious dwelling was cooking a beef-steak with onions. He was wondering whether Fate would ever have such a godlike repast to offer him

when the scullery door opened and a short, portly form appeared and waved a masterful hand at him. "Come on out o' that," it said.

Adam understood that he was to descend the steps and enter the house. He had just time to take in the point that this new authority, though short, stout, bald, and clean shaven as an egg, had much in common with Mr. O'Toole, when he was hustled through a kitchen which contained, in addition to the divine beefsteak, several beautiful and smart young ladies, who sprang, screaming, away in dread of contact with his rags. Abashed at being treated as a pariah, he was conscious of nothing more but a swift, soundless passage up lighted stairways to an apartment of incredible brightness, where there was a roar of falling waters and clouds of steam.

"That's the bath, that's the hot water, that's the hot tap, that's the cold, that's the way you turn it off, that's the way you empty out, that's the chain that pulls the plug, that's the soap, that's the towel, that's all," puffed the portly man, and turned to go. But he stayed at the door, to add over his shoulder, his watch in his hand, "It's nearly half-past five: you've got to be as quick as lightning." The door closed, and Adam was horrified to hear a key turn in the lock.

He sprang at the door, beating it with his hands. "Murder!" he cried. "Holy Mary, help me."

"Ah, go on out o' that with your idolatry," said the man outside in a fierce whisper, adding in a louder tone, "Sure, I'll let you out when I come back." Three footsteps carried him out of hearing; but he returned

in a moment to shout, "Are you clean yet? . . . You'd better hurry up, young man, or the master will be home in a minute and if he catches you it will be the bad day you were born."

With the desperation of one between the devil and the deep sea, Adam plunged out of his tatters and into the bath, where he was freshly dismayed to find himself covered to his waist in the still rising waters. Further was he harassed by a louder banging at the door and the man's voice again, "Turn off the taps, you idgit, d'ye want us all deluged into the Liffey?"

He hastened to obey and having no notion of the properties of water, had no sooner accomplished his purpose than he slipped on the tiles and collapsed backward to the bottom of the bath; the flood sweeping, as it seemed to him, for ever over his head. Frantically but fruitlessly, he struggled to get his chin above the waters, when suddenly they subsided from around him: his wild-cat toes had rescued him by clawing out the plug. He lay at the bottom of the bath and breathlessly thanked the Virgin Mary for her intercession until he sneezed and realized that his skin felt very cold, and that the hot water had been remarkably pleasant round him but for the dread of drowning.

Gathering courage, he replaced the plug and turned on the hot tap very gingerly, and allowed it to run to a depth of some inches, so that if he lay quite flat it would cover him without flowing into his mouth or up his nostrils. Then he took the soap and rubbed his wet fingers in it. It gave off an odor almost as agree-

able as that of the beefsteak: he bit off a small piece but spat it out again, disappointed. Then he rubbed it all over his hands and made some suds which he applied tentatively to his face and neck as far as his collar bones, his arms to the elbows, and his feet and legs to the knees. Washing the soap off again, he realized that the process had been rather pleasant than otherwise. Then the demon of luxury prompted him to a course he felt to be as full of joy as of sin, and he found himself standing in the bath and soaping away wildly over every inch of his anatomy, when the door-handle turned viciously, there was a heavy bump, and a new voice growled threateningly, "What's this? What's this? Who's in there? Answer me at once."

"It's me," Adam answered obediently in a whisper that scarcely left the bath.

The voice outside was switched off in another direction and he heard it say, "Why is the bathroom door locked?" He could not catch any answer, but presently the voice, far off but very loud, bellowed, "Why the devil can't you baptize those damned brats at some other hour of the day?" followed by the monosyllable "Club" and the hall door banged with a crash that shook the cake of soap out of its dish into the bath.

Very much shaken, Adam rinsed himself from the soap, climbed out, dried himself in a small corner of the Turkish towel, and had started to huddle on his clothes when the door burst open and the stout man re-entered. "Didn't I tell you to be as quick as lightning?" he bawled. "And there you go dawdling along as if this



was the Hammams and her ladyship no more than any old bathing-woman."

"I was near drowneded," pleaded Adam.

"Serve you right, then, for going out of your depth and wasting the hot water," the other retorted. "The house is turned upside down with your vagaries and the master is after cursing me so that I don't know whether I'm standing on my tail or my head, and gone off to spend his money playing cards at the club when he had a right to be at home helping her ladyship with her tracts. So give me none of your back chat, but come on out o' that."

All a-tremble, Adam followed him downstairs where, in a small room somewhere at the back, decorated with the text, "Suffer Little Children To Come Unto Me," and the portrait of a clergyman with a photographic smile, the old lady sat awaiting his return. She looked very sad and held her handkerchief in one hand, a biscuit in the other. She brightened on seeing Adam.

"You have washed yourself very nicely," said she, "and although your thoughtless conduct in the bathroom has caused me a deep wound, I will not blame you for that." She laid down her handkerchief and the biscuit and opened her purse. "Here is the penny I promised you."

Adam saw at a glance that it was a different and quite ordinary penny, but the portrait of the clergyman forbade him to protest. He took it for granted that he was the master.

The old lady concluded, "I have promised not to

detain you, so I will refrain from pointing out to you the infamous absurdities of the Popish superstition. For instance, the Virgin Mary, whom I heard you mention a little while since, was a common woman, neither better nor worse perhaps than your own mother. She was in no sense of the word a lady, and so even when she was alive could have been of no use to you. As you are old enough to understand she is dead. . . . As we need not question that she meant well she is probably now in heaven, sitting, perhaps, not far from her Dear Son. . . . But you must never forget that our God is a jealous God, and nothing displeases Him more than that we should take more notice of others than of Him. In future you must pray to no one else or you will be damned. Here is a biscuit to take home with you."

Then the changed body and perplexed soul of Adam Macfadden passed out of the room, down the kitchen stairs, through the midst of the maids, who wondered perhaps at his burning cheeks and glowing eyes, out and up the area steps to the cool, lamp-sprinkled darkness of Fitzwilliam Square, and turned towards where the North Star hung high above the Pro-Cathedral. He was still in wonderland, but somewhere he heard an angelus bell of familiar tone calling through the night, and steering by that, he found himself crossing Ely Place. As he passed Gerrard's, he heard again his own little treble, mechanically calling his papers.

These are the facts of the adventure with the old lady; and allowing for apostolic enthusiasm, you will find them so set forth in the first chapter of that

valuable work, *How Lady B. brought Andrew Macadam to Jesus*. It is published by the Loyal Society for the Conversion of the Celtic Aborigines, at their office in Molesworth Street; and you may have thirteen copies for a shilling, if you cannot be content with one.

## CHAPTER V

### ROME AND GENEVA

It must be remembered that the adventure with the old lady had occurred at the very outset of Adam's journalistic career, and long before the fiasco with Father Muldoon, S.J., had called down upon him his father's recrimination. Between these dates, so notable in themselves, there came one scarcely less notable: when he made to Father Innocent Feeley his First Confession. As are most solitary children, Adam was of a reflective and introspective turn of mind; and even the ingenuous Father Innocent's instruction revolutionized his thought. He commenced to suspect that if his parents, and particularly his father, had ever known good and evil, they must have forgotten the difference before he came to be acquainted with them. He tried to fix the date of this meeting, and arrived at the conclusion that it coincided with that of his birth. That was a remote period to which his memory did not extend; and the first rule of obedience in the Macfadden household was that he must ask no question, under pain of flogging with the porter bottle. Mrs. Macfadden upheld this ordinance as strictly as her husband, and was, indeed, almost more resentful of any hint into inquiry of past, present, or future. But no intelligent lad

could live many years under the shadow of the Pro-Cathedral without arriving at some theory of the origin of life, nor were his commercial competitors in Sackville (or O'Connell) Street reticent upon the subject.

They hailed him from the start, as "You little bastard." This troubled him more than any word of abuse he had heard from his parents, until he realized that it was the common form of salutation among themselves, and that neither the amiable, tipsy, cab-tout outside the Gresham Hotel, nor the policeman who periodically took him in charge, and threatened them with the like for using indecent language, ever addressed them in any other style.

Most of these boys went to half-past eleven Mass at the Pro-Cathedral. Sunday after Sunday, they arrived late and turned out early, save one, by name Sam Lorgan, who was fat, wore boots, and sang in the choir. He was disliked by the other boys and vaguely feared. Adam was at first attracted to him by his pink, comparatively clean face; but Mr. Lorgan repelled his advances. "I wonder you're not afraid of being struck dead, selling old papers to the holy priests," he said, turning away. Adam felt that despite his superior pretensions, he was not really a gentleman. The suggestion of fraud was too base to touch him.

If people liked to buy old papers, why should he refuse to gratify their desires? If easy ones said to him, "Paper?" and handed him a copper, what harm was there in the exchange? If they demanded specifically, "Have you an *Evening Telegraph*, or a *Mail*, or *Herald*?"

he could truthfully answer in the affirmative and proceed to business. . . . If, however, they were precisians, knowing exactly what they wanted, and asked for "This evening's *Telegraph*, or *Mail*, or *Herald*," he would express his regret that he had it not, but would direct them to one who had. He never spared himself in seeing that some one had the benefit of their desire to buy. It was this good nature on his part which ensured his position outside the Gresham Hotel. Other boys tried to imitate him, but failed, for they did not act in good faith, whereas Adam knew himself to be supplying a genuine, if very limited, public want of sound and accurate news.

But, after his first confession, doubts began to creep into his mind. Sammie Lorgan's impertinence perhaps started the train of thought: was the newspaper trade in itself displeasing in the sight of God? He put the question to Father Innocent, who seemed a little surprised; and assured him that many a grand and holy Catholic, though he could not recall their names, had made a fortune out of it, which they distributed among the poor. "There's no sin in making money in any way your father and mother tell you," said Father Innocent. "Only you must remember not to spend it on yourself."

This fully cleared Adam's soul; for certainly he would not stand for another hour in the cold gray of Sackville Street, selling old papers or new, if his parents did not insist upon it: and the only penny he ever remembered to have spent upon himself was the one bestowed upon him by the benevolent, but demonstrably insane old

lady, who had told him that his mother resembled the Blessed Virgin. Fearful lest his father should lay claim to this he had expended it on a pencil with rubber and protector all complete, which he concealed in the inmost arcana of his rags. He hugged it to himself as his one real possession in the world, and also the sole evidence he had that his journey into wonderland was not an idle dream: also it served him as a key to that half glimpsed world where one communicated with others without opening the lips: on scraps of tattered and unsaleable *Telegraphs* and *Heralds* he would pencil out in capital letters his own name or the names of things as: RAILWAYINGIN, POURTARBOTL, MOTARCOR, BLESIDVARGIN, and so on. It was peculiarly gratifying to do this in his rag-bed, by the first bright gleam of the summer sun, while his father and mother still snored in consort, undreaming of the tide of intellectual revolt, swiftly rising in the corner of the room once tenanted by the severely conservative Mr. O'Toole.

Adam's next unsettling conversation was with a tall and stalwart gentleman, ruddy and mustachioed, whom he knew by his combination of dog-collar and soft hat to be some sort of Protestant clergyman. The latter bade him brusquely to be gone when he offered him a paper, then suddenly turned round and called him back. Though his instinct bade him flee, Adam stiffened his courage and obeyed; but he tried to keep out of range of the long powerful arms; for he knew that Protestant clergymen, like Mr. O'Toole, had the Castle behind them.

"Look here, my boy," said the clergyman, in a deep ringing voice. "Not at my boots. Look me straight in the face—and tell me whether you didn't sell me a *Telegraph* one night last week?"

Adam scrutinized him as directed. "I believe an' I did, your honor."

"May I inquire then why you sold me one a year old?"

Adam answered without hesitation, "Sure, your Honor, I had no other."

"What?" cried the clergyman, "you had no other?"

"No, indeed, your honor," answered Adam eagerly. "I'll just show your honor, I've some of the same lot here still. . . . Rioting on Queen's Island, that was the big news?"

"Well, I'm blowed," said the clergyman, and incontinently laughed. "I can't say I don't think you a rascal, my lad, but you're not quite the sort of rascal I thought at first. So here's sixpence to make amends and to remind you not to offer to sell me another newspaper as long as you live."

"I will not, your honor," cried Adam, overjoyed at this unhopd for *dénouement*. "And thank your honor, and God bless you."

The clergyman looked down on him rather wistfully. "Do you really wish God to bless me?" he asked.

"Indeed I do, your honor," rejoined Adam earnestly. "If only I thought he was strong enough to bless a Prodestan."

The clergyman chuckled and patted him on the shoul-



der. "You're too honest for the work you're doing, my lad. Drop it if you can, or one day it will get you into trouble." Then he passed on towards Rutland Square.

Now this man who was a Doctor of Divinity, and, perhaps, better acquainted with Calvin and Knox than was Father Innocent with Aquinas, ought to have realized that it was illogical to warn Adam that his steps led downwards to perdition, and at the same time to butter the slide by giving him sixpence. Mr. Sergeant Macfie, M.P. for Larne Dockyard, would not have done this. On his way home from the Four Courts, he had caught a glimpse of the transaction, and overtaking the clergyman, as he came out of Findlater's, said to him, "I must tell you, Dr. Ryde, that I'm wondering greatly at your giving money to those blackguard boys."

"You couldn't call it giving," the clergyman replied apologetically. "In a sense I owed it to him. . . . Anyhow that particular boy is not a bit of a blackguard. He works hard for his living."

"Mighty hard," said Mr. Macfie dryly; "and it's a queer thing now, but I owe him something too." He waited for his companion to ask him what, but failing to elicit a question, volunteered the answer, "You'll be wondering what a man in my rank of life would be owing to the like of him, and I'll just tell you. That very young fellow, I could almost swear to him, in fact I would swear to him, if the case arose, just four weeks ago last Friday, I made a note of it, extorted from me a penny for a single copy of the *Evening Mail*."

"Why on earth did you give him the penny?" asked Dr. Ryde with surprise.

"I hadn't a halfpenny," Mr. Macfie explained, "and the damned young liar said he'd no change."

"How do you know he was lying?" asked the clergyman.

"How do I know he was lying?" burst out the sergeant. "Man, d'ye think I'm a fool? . . . Well, I'll just tell you, if you're so simple, I'll just tell you like A B C."

"Pray do," said Dr. Ryde.

"Well, it was just this way. I never buy a paper in the street if I can help it, but this young blackguard caught me by crying, 'Sudden Death of the Attorney General.' So I stopped him and said, 'Show me that in your paper and I'll buy it.' And will you believe me he had the impudence to show it to me on the headline, and sell me the paper and take my penny?"

"Well," said Dr. Ryde, "what was the matter then? I should have thought that from your point of view the news was cheap at a penny."

"Ah, I thought you'd say that, I thought you'd ask what was the matter," laughed Mr. Macfie savagely. "Man, when I put on my glasses to read the blessed news in the tram, I found that blasted Attorney-General had died suddenly before I took silk. . . . What are you laughing at? Is it not a scandal? And mind you, you've no remedy. You can't prosecute a lad of that age unless you can get the police to go out of their way to help you. It's no laughing matter."

"No," the divine admitted, "it is not a laughing matter. I feel myself in the wrong to be carried away by the funny side of it."

Mr. Sergeant Macfie halted to thump the pavement with his stick. "I can see no funny side to it. . . . How would you like it if the brat had cheated you? Would you laugh then?"

"I'm almost afraid I might," the clergyman answered soberly. "But I quite agree that one ought not if one is cheated . . ." he broke off. "But that lad was so very young."

"Isn't that what I'm telling you?" snapped Mr. Macfie. "That's the gravamen of the whole thing. He's not too young to rob me of my money, but he's too young for me to have him put in prison for it. . . . But I'm from the North, and I don't forget a thing in a hurry. I've got my eye on that lad."

"You're joking," said the clergyman, stopping with a sigh of relief at his own door.

"I am not," growled Sergeant Macfie.

"But you can't want to have vengeance on a child for tricking you out of a penny?"

"Vengeance? You mean the *Lex Talionis*? I don't want anything for myself. Whatever I do can't bring me back the penny; but I do insist on the principle that neither old nor young will attack me with impunity. And I'll be even with that young blackguard. A boy that begins like that is bound to end on the gallows. Doesn't the Bible tell you as much?"

"Ah, nonsense," retorted the clergyman, suddenly los-

ing his temper. "My brother, the moderator, remembers your cheating at marbles at the Academy when you were older probably than that lad is now."

Mr. Sergeant Macfie gnashed his teeth in panic. "Man, man, you're mad to say that."

The minister answered shortly, "It's true, isn't it?"

"It is not. And if I did, you ought to have the sense to know, and your brother too, who was there and saw it, that I did it in sport, for the honor of winning. There's no shame in that. But you're man daft to hint at such a thing, when you know as well as I do that Mountjoy Square is full of Papists. . . ."

Again Dr. Ryde smiled. "Not quite so full as all that . . ."

"A mighty deal too full," the barrister insisted. "And that damned scoundrel Macarthy almost next door to you."

Dr. Ryde's smile broadened. "Do you reckon him a Papist?"

"Of course I do. What else is he? but a scoundrel, a dissolute, good-for-nothing scoundrel."

"Do you know him well?"

"My wife does and my daughter does too, I'm sorry to say."

The minister coughed. "You don't know him?"

"As if I'd know a fellow like that," Mr. Macfie made outcry. "It's bad enough to live in the same street with him. To say nothing of those other damned Papists you think nothing of giving a member of your own congregation away before."

"Only in sport," murmured Dr. Hillingdon Ryde.

The Sergeant snorted, "Thank God, I'm leaving for Fitzwilliam Place, next quarter. We'll trouble you no more at Findlater's Church."

This was not altogether good news for the clergyman, but he received it with a cheerfulness that added to the barrister's sense of wrong, as he bade him good-night. "So you are coming into your kingdom?" said he, and offered not a felicitating nor yet regretful hand.

"Dangerous fellow, Hillingdon Ryde," the Sergeant told himself, as he turned his back on the house of the man who so contemptuously had parted from him. "I believe he's almost half a Home Ruler as well as a prig. . . . I wonder he gets a Christian to enter his church. . . . It's well I told him no more about that blackguard boy, I'm thinking. . . ." But at this point he reached his own door and had to dissemble his thought before his housemaid, who, though she came from his own constituency and was willing to follow him in battle against the Papists, had no personal respect for Mr. Sergeant Macfie. Nor had his ronion wife, nor yet his lean and hungry-looking daughter, who jeered at him across his dinner table, even while they quarreled with one another and found what fault they dared find with the maid.

Meanwhile across the square, the pastor's wife was asking him why he looked so black and angry.

"It's a shame to show my temper before you," he answered, "but really some men deserve to be shot."

"Don't say that," she urged. "You don't mean it."

He did not insist upon the point, but went on, "The Dublin police, the whole of the Catholic police in Ireland, are brought up by their priests to be slaves to any one in authority. They're the dullest of the yokels, all body and no brain. Too stupid to do anything but obey, so long as they get their food and pay."

The clergyman's wife was not puzzled by the lacunæ in his talk. "Yes," she answered proudly, "I'm sure our teaching makes better men."

"It does," he said bitterly, "but not better Christians."

She argued gently, "Surely the better man must be the better Christian."

"That sounds to me all right when I say it in the pulpit, but I'm not sure I can always apply it in real life." He spoke of went to his wife as a man arguing with himself.

No more was said then, nor until dinner was over and the children gone to bed. When they were again alone he said, "Sergeant Macfie tells me he's leaving us for the south side."

"I knew her heart was set on it," said Mrs. Ryde. "She told me that people wouldn't come so far as Mountjoy Square, even to play bridge."

"Perhaps the distance was not their only objection," said Dr. Ryde pawkily.

His wife looked up at him. "It's a loss, of course, but you're not troubled about that?"

The doctor smiled grimly. "I'm troubled to think that although I've preached at Macfie pretty pointedly more than once in the past ten years, yet if we both

of us died to-night he'd be damned almost more surely than myself."

"Bob," she pleaded, "don't talk so dreadfully."

"Look here, Jinny," he answered, his eyes moist with indignation, "men like Macfie are worse enemies of society than the most ruffianly moonlighter in Kerry. They're not only bad in themselves but their position allows them to debase our moral coinage, even to falsify the scales in which we weigh good and evil. You know it makes me mad with rage to hear of men cutting the tails off cows; but, I tell you, Macfie, if he only dared, would crush and mutilate any man, woman, or child he found in his way. I'd rather be a little blackguard boy, selling papers in Sackville Street, than that pillar of our church."

As Dr. Hillingdon Ryde thus unbosomed his wishes to his wife, one such a little blackguard boy, that seemed to be lolling without a thought against the railings of the Gresham Hotel, was, in fact, praying fervently to the Blessed Virgin, for his conversion from the errors of Geneva to those of Marlborough Street.

## CHAPTER VI

### BUTT BRIDGE

**EVEN** in Dublin, events sometimes march quickly. Adam had been filled by far more than sixpennyworth of affection and admiration for the minister who, as he faintly realized, carried a sufficient soul in his big body. But he attached little importance to his animadversions on his trade, assuming that the clergyman could not clearly understand its nature, nor could he possibly appreciate how great the labor involved and how small the profit. Of this, Mr. Macfadden, though he did nothing beyond taking the money, constantly complained. In any case, and even if in possession of the full evidence, he still had maintained a hostile opinion, how could that weigh against the approval of Father Innocent?

He knew from his own experience, as well as the anecdote of the man with the donkey in the Second Reading-book (which marked his highest attainment in pure scholarship) that it was impossible to please every one. So far, except Father Innocent and his godmother, he had succeeded in pleasing no one. . . . Even the mad old lady, for whose sake he had suffered the perilous if beautiful ordeal of the bath, had praised him with reservations; and his parents consistently envisaged him



as the scum of the earth. His mother perhaps did not mean all she said, being a woman of violent emotions necessarily expressed in violent language; but she let him feel that perhaps even more than her husband, she wished that he had never been born. "I wouldn't have another muddy brat, not if you were to give me a couple of sovereigns," he heard her say to his godmother whenever they met.

And as monotonously, Miss or Mrs. Robinson would reply, "How can you say that now? I always think that you're the lucky one. I wish I could have dear little Adam for myself. But sure, how can I, the life I lead?" Monotonous it was, hopelessly monotonous, but sad and sweet, and he felt it as balm upon the sore reopened by his mother. Surely Miss or Mrs. Robinson was much more like the Blessed Virgin than was Mrs. Macfadden, though even she was not so pretty nor nearly so plump as the holy photographs in the Pro-Cathedral.

But all this is by the way: the point is that the very next night after that when Dr. Hillingdon Ryde had rejected his paper and given him sixpence, the Reverend Father Muldoon, S.J., had rejected his paper and given him nothing but the injunction to go home to his parents and tell them not to send him out swindling people. This message Adam might have lacked the heart to deliver had not his father asked for it. But it made a deep impression on him and one that would have been deeper still, had it not been for his mother's reference to the bedevilments practiced by the sinister

Lady Bland: "the worst woman in Dublin," according to him whom Adam regarded, not without judgment, as the wisest and the best of men. Adam had no ponderable act of sin upon his conscience, but it flashed upon him that darkling night that the only money he had ever been quite freely given, apart from his godmother and Father Innocent, came from a Protestant clergyman and a mysterious old lady, obviously of almost supernatural wealth and power, who had (as he now perceived) blasphemed against the Mother of God.

When Adam woke from the slumber induced by the timely application of Mr. Macfadden's porter bottle, he was not quite the same lad who had started from sleep the morning before: he felt himself in possession of a clear, intellectual purpose, quite apart from the necessity of filling his stomach, which is the prime motive of savage kings and the civilized poor.

Fear of waking his parents forbade him to wash; but he was not anxious so to do; for, although he really liked to be clean, no underfed boy in any latitude higher than the sub-tropical, will for his pleasure wash in cold water. Had he lived in wonderland he would have wallowed in his hot bath twice a day; under the shadow of the Pro-Cathedral he nerved himself to the performance of a meager ablution before going out to sell his papers, except on Saturday nights when his mother gave him hot water to cleanse his feet for the Sabbath Church parade. His hair needed no attention; as his mother in self-defense kept it close cropped; but he adjusted his rags as decently as he could, and, his toilet completed, presented an ap-

pearance of lamentable misery, yet with something in the allure of the moderately clean little face and figure which forbade even the callous to regard him with disgust. He had come to the use of reason and the first light of it was brightening his eyes. This morning he wore a more than ever worried look, as, munching his breakfast crust, he scrawled on the blank space of a displayed advertisement in the *Telegraph*, the words: PAIRIENTZ, SWIMELING, and GEZUWIT.

Then, hearing his mother mutter through his father's breaking snores, the sure presage of coming activity, and dreading that he might be forced to discuss with them what was in his mind, he crept from the room, down the stairs, and round the corner of the alley into the dull, cold street, where the first tram, coming reluctantly in from the sea, was grinding the mud out of the rails; the driver rattling his bell blusteringly through the empty place, as though to warn phantoms from his path or perhaps determine that while he labored none should sleep. Adam thought it would be a grand thing to be a tram driver, just standing all day in a fine warm overcoat, with nothing to do but turn a handle that made you go on or stop as you might fancy, and a bell to ring to cheer you up, and the world slipping by on both sides of you like a procession with no beginning or end.

He often wondered where the tram got to after it turned the corner by Amiens Street Station, the distant vista of which bounded his world to the east. South, across the river, lay Stephen's Green and wonderland.

West, beyond Sackville Street, he remembered going with his mother *via* Henry Street, to look at the outside of a house in which somebody had been murdered, and he knew he had been still farther than that in a place oddly called Green Street, which appeared to be inhabited by policemen and gentlemen dressed up as ladies wearing spectacles and long gray hair and carrying big black bags his mother threatened to put him in if he cried: and if she had done that he would have been taken away and hanged. Going to Green Street at all, unless you were a policeman or dressed up as a lady, was very dangerous for any one that did not want to be hanged. He did not want to be hanged except when his father was beating him with the porter bottle: then he thought he might as well. . . . North lay Findlater's Church and Belvedere College and Gardiner's Street Chapel. Behind them in an unthinkable hinterland lay a marvelous country full of beautiful flowers and ferocious animals that would eat you if they got the chance, but they never did which was the humor of it. And not far from that was another flowery land, through which you had to pass before you could get to heaven. Father Innocent had promised to show him both these places the day he made his first Holy Communion, thus ensuring that it should be the happiest day of his life.

Pending this journey to the Happy Hunting Grounds in the far north, his garden of delight was the great stony space bounded by the Custom House on the east, Liberty Hall on the west, a blank warehouse wall to the north, and the Liffey, crossed by Butt Bridge to

the south; with the railway carried on pillars above all, and mingling the thunder of invisible wheels with the roar of sirens in the river and the clatter of dray horses' hoofs on the quays, and perhaps the note of an impassioned orator, crying wrath like Isaiah from the window of Liberty Hall.

Even at this early hour, the riverside was livelier than anywhere else. The Holyhead boat was in, and a train of outside cars and cabs rumbled and jolted up from the North Wall. Adam never went so far as that: he was content to sit on the Custom House steps and watch the Bristol boat taking her cargo below Butt Bridge. At one time he had believed that she sailed away every other day to Africa, where his uncle was the lord of all, but he knew now that she only went to England, a country less remote and from which not only ships but travelers had been known to return. To-night, when he was going to bed, he would hear her trumpeting as she slipped away from the quayside, with the ropes splashing in the water that had drowned Fan Tweedy, and would make off down stream and out into the unknown bay where the herrings came from, and over hundreds and thousands of miles maybe to England. It was marvelous to think of. He wished that he had the courage to scut across the gangway for a single instant so that he might know what it was to adventure on the mighty deep. . . . Sammie Lorgan's brother Andrew was said to have voyaged as far as Kingstown on the *Integrity*, and might have been drowned but for the prescience of an aunt who sent him home by

tram. The *Integrity* was a famous ship: he wished he had seen her, but that was before his time. She had helped to tug the *Great Eastern* when she came to Dublin. His godmother had shown him a medal she had been given for going on board the *Great Eastern* when she was a little baby. She did not wear it like her other medals; perhaps it was too big. That was a long time ago the *Great Eastern* came to Dublin, but the Custom House had been there before then. That must have been built about the time of Pontius Pilate. In the holy pictures Pontius Pilate's house looked like the Custom House. He had no spunk in him, Pontius Pilate, to let the Jews kill poor Jesus, when he could have told his soldiers to cut off all their heads. Instead of that, he let the soldiers torture Jesus themselves. He supposed soldiers always had to be torturing somebody, and if Pontius Pilate had tried to stop it they'd have tortured him. Things like that happened even now. And Pontius Pilate lived ever so long ago before any one was clever enough to find out what Jesus really meant. Nothing had happened before Pontius Pilate except Daniel in the lion's den, and Joseph in the well, and Noah in the ark, and Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. He wondered why he was called Adam. He did not live in any sort of garden. He never had heard of any little girl being called Eve. Was it because Eve was a downright bad lot? Perhaps Lady Bland was called Eve? . . .

At this though he awoke to the work in hand. It was nearly nine o'clock. Soon he would be allowed

to see Father Innocent if he called at the Presbytery and said it was urgent. Was it so urgent as all that? Did it matter to any one if he had a good or a guilty conscience? . . . Yes, it mattered to Father Innocent, he was sure of that.

## CHAPTER VII

### MARLBOROUGH STREET AND GARDINER'S STREET

ADAM shivered as he roused himself to stand up, for you get the east wind blowing up the river as the tide rises under Butt Bridge. . . . He passed beneath the railway arches as a train boomed menacingly overhead, and beyond Liberty Hall into Abbey Street. . . . At the corner of Marlborough Street his eye was caught by big black letters on a yellow ground, "The Playboy of the Western World." . . . He wondered what that meant. It was placarded on the wall of the Abbey Theater; that queer little house where there used to be the grand fighting, as he often heard tell outside the Gresham. What was a playboy, and where the Western World? Did that mean America or just Green Street, or something between the two?

He was passing the Pro-Cathedral. . . . Hesitating a moment he invoked the Blessed Virgin, took the steps by assault and captured the bell. He had to ring a second time, and the janitor, who tardily answered, rebuked his precipitancy and threatened to send him about his business. . . . But insisting that his only business was with Father Feeley, he was admitted within the door, albeit no farther. The hall smelt deliciously of fried fish—he remembered it was Friday—things would



have been easier to carry through on a Sunday; there would have been more time. . . . Father Innocent had just said Mass and was at breakfast. But he lost no time about coming to Adam in the hall; and, on learning that he was come with something more than a message, brought him to his own little room to hear what he had to say.

"There's nothing wrong at home, my dotey boy, is there?" he asked; "'tis long since I've seen your good mother." It was indeed some years, not that Mrs. Macfadden failed to make her "Easter Duty," but she preferred to have her confessor in another parish.

Mr. Macfadden was content to see that his family attended to their religion, but for himself insisted that Sunday was a day of rest and the other days he never knew when he might have to work hard, so he granted himself a plenary indulgence. Apart from ceremonial observance, he was as devout a Catholic as you could find in Count Street, and woe betide the man or woman who belittled the Faith in his hearing and within range of his boots.

"If only the prosecutions would begin again," he was fond of saying by way of table-talk, "I'd show them who was the true Catholic. Luthermiyelbo." . . . For a long time Adam believed "Luthermiyelbo" must be another way of saying "Amen," but Father Innocent told him that this was not so, and although Mr. Macfadden, of course, meant no harm by it, Adam ought not to repeat it.

"For Martin Luther was a priest, though a bad one,

and you must never speak disrespectfully of any priest, not even me." . . . This explanation had the quite undesired effect on Adam's mind of lightening the diabolical darkness of the Monk of Wittenberg by a ray of glory from the halo of Father Innocent.

Adam found it almost easier to talk to him than to the Blessed Virgin; for he had the benefit of replies which allowed him to elucidate what he said. It was not long before he had given him full and accurate details of what had passed not only between him and Father Muldoon, but with the minister. Father Innocent alternately laughed and was grave. "And wasn't I the silly fool," he said more than once, "not to have understood about the papers long ago." He concluded, "There's an idea now. . . . Who put you up to it? . . . And how is it your parents didn't know about it?"

"They knew all about it," said Adam readily. "They thought it was a grand idea."

The priest looked at him severely. "Don't tell me your mother said that."

"Sure, she did, sir," said Adam, "and used to get me the papers herself until she tired of it."

Father Innocent's face took an expression of horrified melancholy. "Then it was actually she put you up to it?"

"Her and Mr. O'Toole."

"Who's Mr. O'Toole?" the priest asked, then went on hurriedly, as though to avoid hearing the answer, "Whoever he is, he put you up to a mortal sin."

So far Adam had been rather agreeably titillated by

the interview, but now his face fell as he asked, "Am I going to hell?"

"Arrah, nonsense," returned the priest testily, "God doesn't send little boys to hell for obeying their parents, not if they went and stopped coaches on the high road, which is worse than selling old papers for new, there being an element of violence, which is a sin itself, apart from the wrong done to others. But you've got to give it up at once. No papers to-night, Adam, mind ye that, not if you could sell them for a shilling apiece. Better starve than break the law."

"Me father will belt me," said Adam, in a voice that trembled on the verge of a whimper.

The priest was horror-stricken. "What!" he cried, putting several additional aspirates in the word to emphasize it.

"Me father will belt me, but *I'm* used to that," said Adam, adding, with a relapse into the piteous, "I'd rather be belted than go to hell or do anything you told me not."

"There, there, my dotey boy," said Father Innocent, almost kissing him in the desire to express his sympathy. "No one will belt you, much less your father. Why would he belt you I'd like to know?"

"If I don't sell the papers, I'll bring no money home, and then he'll have no money for porther, or at least he won't have as much as he does be wanting."

"God help us, this is a terrible story," quoth Father Innocent. "I've heard of this happening in some families that had no religion, but I never thought a Christian

man could send his son out to swindle people, that he might have money to drink. Not that I mean to judge your father. I'm only telling you what is in my mind, knowing that you're a wise fellow for your age and you will forget what I tell you when you leave this room."

This proposition appeared to Adam as of the nature of a paradox; but he did not say so.

"Whatever are we to do?" Father Innocent went on; after much cogitation he shook his head. "I'm a silly fellow to-day. I think I'll just pray to God Almighty for His guidance." He plumped down then and there on the floor and crossed himself. "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Then he buried his face in his hands and Adam heard but the mutter of his prayer. It did not occur to him to join in it: two people ought not to speak at once, unless, of course, they use the same words; then the more the better.

Adam's eyes wandered inquisitively about the room. Except that it was tidier and much smaller, it resembled his own home, and through the window one had just the same outlook, only seen from a different angle: melancholy backs of tall brick houses, variegated by patches of wood and corrugated iron or zinc; down below squalid yards, sheds, stables, and laneways; and over all a spider's web of wires and the petrified Nelson with his back turned, looking towards the south side and no doubt wishing that he too might remove thither.

Father Innocent arose, an easier man. "The best

thing to do," said he, "is to see that you don't get belted any more. And as it was Father Muldoon who saved you from wrongdoing last night, I think we can't do better than go and tell him the whole story, and see whether perhaps he can't do something more for you. . . . He's an awfully clever man and most influential. Not like me, that knows nobody but yourself."

Adam was much uplifted at the thought that Father Muldoon was so powerful he could save him from a belting. Father Innocent stood hesitant, his hand on the door. "I wonder now, could I get him on the telephone and ask him if he's there at Gardiner's Street or not. . . . Better not, he might think it a piece of impudence from me."

Adam thought the Jesuit must be a grand hard man as well as powerful, if he looked down on Father Innocent. The latter looked at his watch and then took his hat and umbrella. "I think we'll just step up to Gardiner's Street and see if we can't catch him before he goes out. If he won't see us, sure we can only wait till he can. Anyhow we'll be getting on in the right direction. Come, my dotey boy."

Proud was Adam to be seen by the leisured world of Marlborough Street, taking the air upon its doorsteps, in the company of his spiritual adviser and to hear from area to area as they passed along a murmurous buzz of inquiry as to the wherefore of it all. Proud was he to leave the reek of the slums behind and climb beside his panting benefactor the steep ascent of North Great George's Street, down which avenue lowered

grimly gracious Belvedere. Arrived at the top they encountered the tall minister, Dr. Hillingdon Ryde, with a lady and a boy rather bigger than Adam passing the schoolhouse gate. The priest and he exchanged cordial greetings and Adam was taken aback when, crossing Temple Street, Father Innocent said, "That's one of the best men in Ireland, but remember you're never to lift your cap to him unless he first takes notice of you." Adam grasped that this injunction was based on dogma, and not to be questioned.

He noticed that Father Innocent had much the same nervousness at the last moment in ascending the steps of the Jesuit House as he had at Marlborough Street. But the door was more promptly opened and there was no difficulty made about their admission to a hall which smelt only of beeswax, and further to an apartment most handsomely furnished with a round table and serious looking arm-chairs, and decorated with large square portraits of churchmen of all degrees, with saintly glances and beatific smiles, all looking straight at you, so that no matter in what part of the room you tried to hide yourself, you felt that every one of them had both his eyes on you. Adam had a momentary attack of nerves: he felt he was not nearly good enough for their company. It was a relief to gather from Father Innocent that they were all dead, but disturbing to be told that not one of them was a patch on Father Muldoon, who seemed to Adam a comparatively ordinary man.

In this room, however, he proved to be much more impressive than in the street, and a very much pleasanter

gentleman. He kept them waiting but made up for it when he arrived, looking in his soutane and biretta, as if he, too, might one day hope to figure among the portraits on the wall.

He countered Father Innocent's apology for intruding on him by reproaching him for not telephoning. "Then I could have arranged things so as not to waste your time."

"Oh, indeed, father, what is my time compared with yours?" Father Innocent protested.

"That we shall not know before eternity," said the Jesuit, and they both laughed, and Adam wondered at their joking about such a serious subject. "It is delightful to be favored by a visit from my Parish Priest. It makes me feel at home again."

"Every soul in Dublin, you might say, was glad to have your reverence safe home from the other side of the world," said Father Innocent, adding to his companion, "Just think of that now, Adam; Father Muldoon, who is talking to us now here in his room, just as if nothing wonderful had ever happened to him, only yesterday, as you might say, was preaching God's Holy Word to multitudes standing on their heads."

Adam murmured his recognition of this gratifying news, worthy to figure in his conversation outside the Gresham Hotel, where the marvelous was valued. He hoped that the great Father Muldoon would explain how he did it, but the great man, modestly reticent as to his achievement, continued, "Yes, the Irish Province is a

very interesting one and so varied. I believe it is the most extensive in the visible world. . . . I only wish it were not so thinly populated." His tone grew brisk. "But it is for you to tell me your news and not to listen to my chatter."

Father Innocent thereupon introduced the subject of Adam's unintentional breach of the laws of God and man, laying proper stress on Father Muldoon's part in saving him from the threatened abyss.

The great man listened in becoming silence, then turned to Adam and said sharply, "No doubt you thought me very hard last night, but I may tell you, my lad, Father Feeley is quite accurate in saying I saved you from the abyss. The police have had the tip from some one in high authority to lay their hands on any boy they find trying to do the sort of thing you've been doing. And although I'm not sure that a lad of your age could be put on his trial, I dare say you know that a policeman can make it pretty hot for you without taking you as far as the station."

"That's the truth indeed," declared Father Innocent, "and once you have the police against you in Dublin, sure there's no more hope for you here. You'd better book for America at once, before you're old enough for them to clap you in Kilmainham Jail."

"I won't go so far as to say that," said Father Muldoon. "There's more than one God-fearing man in the Police."

"Indeed and of course there is," Father Innocent agreed. "There's no harm in the police as men at all.



It's only their work that makes them brutal, like butchers you might say. They forget the poor dumb animals have feelings like themselves. And if one of them happens to remember he was born an Irishman, and that his father and mother were poor Irish people, then the Castle . . ."

Father Muldoon stopped him with a smile and a wave of the index finger of his right hand. "No politics, please, Father Feeley," he said. "We are agreed that the lad must be kept out of the hands of the police . . . if that is in our power . . ."

"Of course it's in our power," answered Father Innocent hotly. "We've only to give him a fair chance and it's the back of my hand to the police."

"In those days of competition," said the Jesuit, with calculated coolness, "it is not so easy to give a lad a fair chance as you call it."

Father Innocent made a movement towards the door, slight, but not to be neglected by Father Muldoon. "I've a notion that if the lad were a Presbyterian he wouldn't find it so hard," was all he said.

Father Muldoon knit his brows. "I see," he said, and rang the bell. "This is quite interesting." There was a tap at the door and the black beard of the janitor appeared. "John," said Father Muldoon, "just ring me up Rathmines, Double Three, and tell me when you get them." When the man was gone he addressed himself solemnly to Adam: "This is a great moment in your life, my lad. I hope you will always remember it. I am going to invoke the greatest power in Ireland in your

behalf. . . . That is, if I am so fortunate as to get him on the telephone."

In a few moments the janitor returned with the announcement that the great power was holding the line, and Father Muldoon momentarily so forgot his dignity as to bustle forth to get in touch with him; which Father Innocent hastened to explain to Adam was an act of marked condescension on the part of the provincial. When he returned, and considering the greatness of the occasion he was not unconscionably long, he carried a visiting card which he handed to Adam. "Bring that down to the *Herald* office in D'Olier Street, the publishing department, do it now, and they'll arrange for you to have as many copies of the next edition as you think you can sell. Those you don't sell, if there be any you don't sell, you understand you bring back before the next is issued. They'll tell you the time."

"Oh, thank you, Father," cried Father Innocent, clasping his hands.

"Don't thank me," said the Jesuit dryly. "Later on I'll see what can be done about the *Telegraph*. But, I think it would be as well for Macfadden, if that's his name, to promise us now that on no account whatever, will he ever sell another copy of the *Evening Mail*."

"Oh, indeed, your reverence," Father Innocent hastened to answer for him. "Sure, Adam Macfadden's the best little Catholic in the world, and he'll never dream of doing anything your reverence tells him not."

"I'm waiting to hear him promise," the Jesuit an-

swered shortly. "If he can do so he'd better speak up for himself."

Adam looked him in the face, wounded by his treatment of Father Innocent. "I promise never to sell any more Late Buffs," he answered.

"Does that include the early ones?" the Jesuit inquired, with the air of a man of the world.

"Sure there's no early ones," Adam returned, unable to conceal his contempt for his pretentious ignorance.

Both priests burst out laughing and the Jesuit produced a shilling. "There," said he, "that is for being a good little Catholic," and so saying, he shook their hands quite affably and bowed them out.

Descending the steps, Adam decided that Gardiner's Street smelt proudly as Fitzwilliam Square and was just elevenpence more wonderful.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OLD COMET

As Adam trotted along beside Father Innocent, who had to hurry back to his proper work, he had little time to meditate on the change in his fortunes. What struck him most was the grandeur of Father Muldoon, more powerful than the mad old lady, more munificent than the minister, and in no way afraid of the police. He had supposed all good Catholics to be afraid of the police: the only people who ever got the better of them were the Protestant young gentlemen from Trinity College, who knocked them about for fun, and the red-coats from over the sea, who tripped them up, kicked them in the stomach and even stabbed them with their sidearms with impunity, unless they fell into the hands of the other soldiers with red caps and the legend M.P. blazoned on their sleeves. Sometimes a couple of women might get a constable down and scratch his face; but they rarely had the sense to get away before other constables came to the rescue, twisted their arms off until they fainted, and then carried them away, tied down on stretchers, and got them fourteen days as violent drunks.

It was on this rather than his own future he reflected as he descended North Great George's Street and left the newly discovered northern wonderland behind. Marl-

borough Street looked the same as he had left it an hour before, and Count Street had in no way improved since he had seen the first tram plow it in the early morn. Father Innocent brought him back to his own room at Marlborough Street and made him wash and tidy himself before proceeding to carry Father Muldoon's introduction across O'Connell Bridge to the *Herald* office. His parting advice to him was to tell his mother fully what had happened, and to leave it to her to tell Mr. Macfadden, if she thought fit. And in a rare moment of worldly wisdom he added, "If you make more money than you did before, you'd better give it to your mother and say nothing to your father." But he did not say what excuse Adam was to advance in the event of his making less.

The first night was a great success. Adam threw a light heart and a joyful voice into his trade, and, assisted by a juicy murder in Whitechapel, found that the decreased profit was amply compensated for by the rapidity of the turnover. He was already ninepence-halfpenny to the good and had ceased for the moment to cry his wares, that he might rest his voice, and perhaps dreaming a little of the marvelous changes the day had rung for him, when he was conscious of a well-dressed gentleman (as he would have called him) with a smart mustache and a tall hat, pushing his way through the posse of yelling boys, who offered him papers. Adam had smiled before now to see how often and how vainly this stranger had been besieged in much this fashion; the other boys seemed convinced by the nobility of his appearance that

he must prove a valuable quarry could they but once bay him into surrender. Yet Adam could recall only one occasion on which he had bought a paper, and that was from himself. Instinct sanctioned by experience forbade Adam to offer him another, and to-night he did not even catch the eye that was thrown on him as he passed.

Yet suddenly the gentleman, when freed from the pursuit of the other boys, turned back towards Adam and produced a threepenny bit, holding it so that the light from the electric street lamp shone on it tantalizingly. "I want a *Mail*," he said briskly.

"Yes, your honor," Adam smartly answered, and put his hand to his mouth to call to the nearest of his competitors, "Patsy, gentleman here wants a Late Buff."

The piece of silver instantly disappeared. "Damn your impudence. I asked you for a *Mail* and no one else."

"I've only the *Herald*, your honor," replied Adam respectfully, knowing that it was not merely futile but dangerous to betray temper.

"Then why didn't you say so when I asked you if you had a *Mail*?"

"You didn't ask him anything," broke in the summoned Patsy, disgruntled to the verge of war. "You said you wanted a *Mail*, I heard you, and here it is for a penny, if you're a gentleman, and a halfpenny if you're not."

He whose gentility was in the balance beat the pavement feverishly with his stick. "You're a pretty pair, the two of you," he snapped, then swung on his heel and

marched off; but not quick enough to avoid the repartee, "And you're a muddy old snot," flung after him by a chorus of them whose hopes he had so often deluded.

"That old blackguard, whoever he is, was on your track to-night," said Patsy. "It's well you twigged it about the *Mail*, and called me."

Adam was about to tell him the real why and wherefore of his having only the one paper when a stage-whisper of prodigious strength reached them from the other boys, "Nix, nix. . . . Here's old Comet," followed by a crying of their papers in the dulcet and decorous tones in which they used once a week to acquaint the world that they were little Catholics and loved their holy faith.

Adam straightened himself to present his best appearance before "Old Comet," who, he understood, was a Chief Inspector of Police or something equally terrific. But, for all that he skinned his eyes and pricked up his ears he neither saw nor heard any one in the shape or carriage of a policeman approach; and, although Patsy had lost heart and run across the street under the pretense of seeing some one beckoning to him from Gilbey's, the other boys were laughingly shoving their papers under the spectacled nose of an old gentleman who kept waving them aside, apparently much distressed. Adam felt quite sorry for him, and wished that he had the courage to protest against such treatment of a defenseless old man.

"Sure I've no time to read, boys. What's the good of offering me your papers?" Adam heard him say.

"Sure there's nothing in the papers a decent old man like me would like to read. . . . Whitechapel murder, is it? Indeed and I'll not read about a murder this night in dread that I might see a ghost. . . . Thank God the noble Metropolitan Polis kape us all safe from that sort of thing over here. . . ." There was a roar of delighted laughter, but he continued to shake his head stolidly and pathetically. "Ah, let me be, now, I tell you. And don't be laughin' at a harmless old man, going home to his ma." Suddenly he stopped. "Well, if I've got to buy a paper off one of you, I'd like to have one that has nothing about that bloody murder in it." He looked round the group, which Adam had gradually drifted into or been engulfed by, as though he expected a serious tender of an expurgated journal; but none came.

"Very well, then," said he, "if I've got to read about that nasty murder, I'd like to read nothing about it that would upset my tea; so I'll just take a *Herald*. I know that will have nothing wrong in it, for Mr. Murphy is a particular friend of mine." . . . The end of the sentence was drowned in roars of shrill mirth.

Adam was standing open-mouthed and wondering why he laughed at jokes about murder, when he felt a curious thrill, of dreamlike acuteness as the laughter of the others oddly hushed and the eyes of all turned on himself: the funny old gentleman was drawing one of his last papers from his hand. For an instant a cold sweat burst over him, and he mumbled a Hail Mary under



his breath, terrified by those powers of darkness known to him vaguely as the Law.

The old gentleman took off very deliberately the spectacles he was wearing when he had opened the paper, but Adam was too frightened to think this odd; he did not even wonder why he had not been paid; he stood spell-bound, waiting, as did the others, though he thought he heard Patsy, somewhere behind, mutter, "Run, you omadhawn, run." Quite a number of voices within as well as without took up the theme, "Run, run, run for your life, run, run, run."

Then the pursed lips of the old gentleman expanded into a smile, which ended in a guffaw. "That's grand news, that Whitechapel murder," he said, folded the paper neatly and put it in his hat. "I don't mind giving you thruppence for the like of that," and he pressed three copper coins into Adam's rigid hand. Then he turned with a grim smile that slew the vacuity of the moment before, to the still gaping knot of boys. "I can tell you honorable young gentlemen, that I know some one who has a far worse opinion of you than I have myself." He dropped his voice to add, "And what's more, I have the blessed privilege to inform you that they breed as big fools in Belfast as in Dublin itself."

The boys, freed from their ensorcelled restraint, clamored eagerly, "Who is it you name, sir? Is it the old stinker in the top hat?"

"That would be telling you," laughed the old gentleman with a cheery wink, that took in the whole circle,

and, abruptly dropping all pretense of a shuffle, he stepped out like a guardsman and disappeared.

"Faix, you'd a worse shave than ever that time," said Patsy to Adam. "I dunno how it was Old Comet didn't have you."

Adam answered not. He was clinging to the Gresham railing, trembling in every limb. "Look here," said Patsy, "don't you go and swound or maybe the polis will let on you've a sup taken. You're all right now. Didn't Old Comet give you the thrippence to own up he was bet. He's a muddy old terror is Old Comet, and he's hanged more men than any wan in Ireland, but he loses like a gentleman and bears no malice."

The three coppers dropped from Adam's hand and rolled their several ways across the wide pavement to the gutter. It was perhaps the supremest moment of Patsy's young life, when he elected to stand by Adam instead of chasing them. Fat Sammie Horgan colared the lot; but another bigger boy intervened, took them from him at the cost of his naked shin barked by the choralist's boots, and offered two to Adam, keeping the third for himself by way of salvage.

Adam saw them not, and the boy stared at his white face. "He's dead surely?" he whispered, awestruck, to Patsy.

Patsy shook a head that was contemptuous of the bigger boy's ignorance. "Not a bit of it. He's only scared to death by Old Comet. Hold up his other arm, and we'll get him home between us."

"Is it far?" the other inquired judiciously, but not without goodwill.

"Round in Count Street only. You'll be back before you know you're there." Patsy pleaded for his friend and with success.

Adam was very vaguely conscious of being moved along by hands that had not been trained to gentleness, and screamed with terror; but a kindly voice said in his ear, "Be aisy now. It's Patsy Doyle and Big Finegan that has hold of you, bringing you home."

After that he glimpsed only sharp flashes of light and heard a tram grinding familiarly through Count Street; then an angry voice, his mother's telling him to wake up and not be an idiot, then his father's voice and a stunning blow and he was reeling among the rags on his bed.

But when he was wakened again it was by a voice more like Emily Robinson's. He looked up expectantly and saw a rosy-faced sister, and gasped out, surprised at the piping of his own tone, "What's this grand place?"

He was prepared to hear that it was a bedroom in heaven; and it had to be broken to him very slowly, first by the rosy-faced sister, then by a cheerful, jocular, baldish gentleman, who never tired of peeping (as he called it) at his tongue, and finally by Father Innocent Feeley, the only reliable authority, that he was still on earth.

The previous Sunday Mr. Sergeant Macfie had fastened himself upon the minister as they walked up Gardiner's

Row and said, "I notice that young blackguard I told you of is gone from outside the Gresham Hotel. I bet you now he's come to no good."

The minister answered simply, "I suppose we shall see little of you after to-day?" So the great man could not well pursue the subject of his little triumph.

As they spoke, the astral body of one of them was hovering above the prostrate form of a little boy, trying to drop the noose of a rope around his neck. This curious scene was taking place just half a mile away, at the Mater Misericordiæ Hospital. At the foot of the bed stood another figure, affable and respectable, jingling in one hand three coppers, and in the other thirty silver shillings.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MOTHER OF MERCY

THE weeks that Adam spent in hospital were of great influence on his development, for as soon as he was well enough to sit up the sister presented him with a penny exercise book, in which his pencil had room to play, and he filled it with oft repeated words as: FEEVR, FEEVUR, FEEVER; DOKTR, DOCKTR, DOCKTUR, DOCTUR, DOCTER, DOCTOR; KYNS, KINES, KINNESS, KINDESS, and at last KINDNESS. There were also pages with sinister looking adumbrations of vocables, beginning with H and M and P and R, which the doctor advised the sister to tear up while the patient slept. He never complained of their disappearance, and soon ceased to waste paper on them; but from time to time, he would scratch down anxiously the strange symbol—OLCOMT, and burst into tears. Concerning this he neither offered nor could be persuaded to divulge any sort of explanation; so when the sister saw the first three letters appear she would make some excuse to take the pencil away; and Adam opposed this in no way. He always smiled at her whatever she did, and his gratitude failed not even when she washed him; for he believed that the hospital belonged to her, and that she was as powerful as the mad old

lady and Father Muldoon together, and incomparably kinder.

She really was very kind, from the professional point of view too much so; for when she ought to have been asleep in bed, she would find some excuse to remain by his side to read him Canon Schmidt's *Tales*, which he regarded as a terrifying if delicious work; for it convinced him that the police treated French noblemen even worse than they did Dublin paper-boys. She even allowed him to take this book in his own hands, although it was very precious to her; for inside the cover was pasted a certificate setting forth in appropriately chaste form that she had won it as the First Prize for Deportment, at the Loretto Convent, Rathfarnham, where it had been presented to her at the end of the scholastic year, terminating in the summer of the last year of that gracious monarch whose name had been so often on Adam's lips, though only in the way of business. But Adam found it too alarming to read by himself, the Sister not at hand to assure him that these things had never happened, or if they did that it was a long time ago, before any one she knew could remember, and there was no possibility of their ever occurring again. Virtuous French noblemen were no longer guillotined, just as priests and nuns were no longer burned, or hanged, drawn, and quartered even in London. Only really downright very wicked people were put to death nowadays. . . . Adam perceived that he must never let her suspect how narrowly he had escaped the gallows.

On the back of the exercise book were sets of measures

and multiplication tables. When alone he preferred their study to that of Canon Schmidt, and easily committed the tables to memory; though, as he did so without seeing in them anything more than mere arbitrary figures, he had difficulty in saying off hand whether it were twice two, or four times four or twelve times twelve that produced the memorable total of one hundred and forty-four. Had the terms of the proposition taken the concrete form of twelve dozen copies of the *Herald*, he would have been quite clear about it.

Father Innocent brought him a nice clean copy of that scholastic masterpiece too modestly described as the Penny Catechism, and the contents of that were promptly stowed away in the receptive little brain, next door to the multiplication tables. He would chant himself to sleep with alternate verses, so to speak, from the Ten Commandments and Ten times Ten, until they merged in each other and he slumbered. Father Innocent proudly noted his name for Confirmation. . . . "Glory be to God, that dotey child will live to be a saint," he said to the sister.

She smiled. "He is a dotey child," she agreed, but added, "I wonder what will become of him when he leaves us?" Even she was more worldly wise than Father Innocent. Meanwhile she conspired with the doctor that he should not be flung back into Count Street in too great a hurry.

Not that anything was known at the hospital against Adam's parents. Father Innocent would say no more than that they were unfortunate poor people, but he

never heard anything against their being good Catholics. Mrs. Macfadden created a tolerably good impression when she came once a week to see her son. She was sober, better clad than they had anticipated from the appearance of Adam, most respectful to every one, if most of all to the hall-porter, which showed tact, and her conversation with her son revolved round the idea how glad he ought to be of the chance of dying among Catholics now, instead of perhaps later on falling into the hands of Prostutelizers, which was true and edifying though crudely put and not perhaps as cheerful as the sort of talk the doctor recommended. The sister herself felt it necessary to warn him against the ways of proselytizers, with whom he had obviously already had some parley, if no more. He asked the sister if she thought his mother was at all like the Blessed Virgin. She said she had not noticed any resemblance, but could see that she was a very good, kind, and wise mother; for she had not attempted to smuggle in any presents for him, which was against the rules.

Adam looked up at her round, comely face. "You really are like the Blessed Virgin," he blurted. She reddened and dropped her hand on his mouth, and told him that if he said such wicked things he would make her cry; but he heard her singing softly to herself immediately afterwards, and she brought a fresh book to read to him next day, with thrilling illustrations of the different methods by which the curious might anticipate being burned in Hell. But the doctor put his ban on that at once, and she gave him a fresh exercise book



instead, which he after all preferred, as he could now draw people burning in hell for himself. He expected the sister to be much dismayed by these; but, having closely scrutinized a whole series of the eternally damned, she only asked, "Who dropped their dollies on the grass?"

. . . Nevertheless, he drew a picture of a policeman, which was after a long process of elimination, identified as such, so he felt encouraged to attempt an elaborate composition embracing the Bristol boat, the Custom House, and the Butt Bridge, with the railway, but they got so confused that he lost his temper and tore the paper and began to cry, until sister came to him and soothed him with the rhymed legend of a maternal householder, possessing a dog whose variety was infinite as Cleopatra's.

Telling the sister that she was like the Blessed Virgin brought into Adam's mind his godmother, in whom he had also long ago seen some slight resemblance. He wondered that she never came to see him. He asked the sister if godmothers were not admitted. She said she knew of no obstacle, and advised him to consult his mother. But he knew better than to do that. He made up his mind to ask Father Innocent, and one day, when the little priest had arrived unwontedly sad and silent, he broached the subject.

"Father," said he in a low voice, "I do be often thinking of my godmother, Miss Emily Robinson."

The little priest started and raised his eyes until they fell upon the boy's face. Adam was plucking nervously at the bedclothes, his own eyes downcast and unconscious of Father Innocent's scrutiny. His mind might

have been far away in place and time, as far as the tether of his little life allowed.

"Glory be to God, my boy," said Father Innocent. "What put it in your head to ask me that?"

"I only thought she'd be more like to come than my mother if she knew the place I was."

"She does know, but she can't come," said Father Innocent.

"Why can't she come? Won't they let her?" Adam's tone was peevish.

"No," said Father Innocent solemnly, "they won't let her. God won't let her."

Adam felt something chilly creep swiftly down his back. He visualized a garden he had never seen. "Where is she?" he asked in a frightened underbreath.

Father Innocent did not directly answer. "You said you do be often thinking of her, Adam. Tell me, do you ever pray for her?"

Adam was always at pains to give Father Innocent not merely true but explicit answers. "Sister makes me pray for my father and mother every day, and I always pray for you and Mrs. Robinson and Patsy Doyle, who was kind to me outside the Gresham, and a Protestant gentleman, as once gave me sixpence, and Father Muldoon, when I remember, but I never pray for Mr. O'Toole; for he's a blackguard and I hate the sight of him."

"If he is that, then maybe he wants it most of all, except myself," said Father Innocent. "But I'm glad you pray for your dear godmother; for she deserves it

most of all . . . except, of course, your poor mother, who has more trials than you know of." He was silent for a moment as though uncertain whether to say more or to take his departure.

At last he took Adam's hand. "I'm going now, but before I say good-by, I want to ask you to do something for me. Will you do it now?"

Adam's little breast swelled with mingled awe and self-importance as he asked what it was.

"It's just this," said Father Innocent. "Though God help me, I can ill afford it, I want you to give my bit of your prayers to-night to add to Mrs. Robinson's bit, and if you should wake in the night, to turn your pillow, maybe, I want you to say to God with all your heart and soul, Be good to my godmother, Emily Robinson, for she was good to me, a little child there were few to care for. . . . And, then, maybe, when the morning comes and you hear the birds singing, maybe Emily Robinson too will be singing in heaven, because God had heard your prayer."

Adam's ready tears trickled on the priest's hand. "She's dead?" he tried to say, and the priest guessed at the words and answered, "She's dying surely. I gave her Extreme Unction, coming here. And I told her I was coming here to see you, and she couldn't get a word out of her, poor saint, but her eyes sent you her love. . . ." His own tears mingled with Adam's. . . . "You'll pray for her, my dotey boy, you're too young to understand how needful it is that you should be prayin' for her, but that will make your little offering, from your

own sick-bed, where the cruelty of the world has sent you, as it sent her to hers, all the more gracious in the sight of God."

"I'll pray for her, Father," whispered Adam, and the little priest hurried away.

"Father Innocent is a lamb," declared the sister, when she came on night duty. "But sure I wish he didn't make you cry."

"It isn't him," Adam responded. "It's my godmother's dying, and I can't remember now how he told me to pray for her."

The sister was, of course, touched but equal to the occasion. "Oh, if that's all," she said, and supplied him promptly with a pretty little conventional appeal for speedy recovery or happy death. She was sorry for Miss or Mrs. Robinson, but mainly concerned that her patient should not lie awake pondering the mystery of the departure of the soul.

Adam dutifully repeated the words after her, but without any conviction that they could catch God's ear, and yawned and said good-night, and kissed her, and yawned again, and went to sleep. But in the middle of the night he awoke with a vibrant desire at all costs to help Miss or Mrs. Robinson. At the end of the ward he could see the sister nodding over the *Life of the Curé d'Ars*. . . . In perfect silence he slipped out of bed and dropped on his knees. The words Father Innocent had taught him came flooding back now: "Be good to my godmother, Emily Robinson, for she was good to me, a little child there were few to care for." He repeated this phrase again and

again with an ever growing fervor for the safety of his godmother's soul; but still he was not sure that God heard. . . . Then an inspiration seized him and he cried aloud, "Holy Mary, tell God that He must be good to Emily Robinson, for she was good to me, a little child . . ."

The next instant he was in the sister's arms and back in bed, but she was too late to save him from pneumonia.

## CHAPTER X

### MOTHER GOOSE'S FAIRY TALES

FROM first to last, what with typhoid and pneumonia, Adam spent many weeks in hospital—he had been well content to fulfil his mother's wish and end his life there. But the doctor, though he scolded the sister quite unduly for her carelessness in letting him slip out of bed, carried him through to a definite convalescence. . . . For a considerable period the pencil and exercise book were put away, and he was allowed nothing to read and no visitors. . . . Mother Hubbard's dog had fallen a victim to custom and his excellent parts were losing interest when Father Innocent reappeared at last, phenomenally gay as are only those whose days are sorrowful.

"I'd have a right to spank you for getting out of bed and catching cold," he said, "but sure I'm a silly old fellow with a weak heart, and instead of bringing you a big cane, I've brought you a story book about the most wonderful adventures were ever heard of, and I greatly misdoubt if the half of them are true. But you can form your own opinion, which is better than mine, for it's many a long day since I've had time to read it."

Adam only said, "Oh, Father," but his eyes glistened and his thin fingers clutched like a miser's at the book;

it was an honest square volume, neatly covered with brown paper.

"Mind you," said Father Innocent, "it's only as a lend *I'm* giving it to you; and you're not to go tearing the pictures out for sister here to hang on the wall, nor are you to be doing your higher mathematics on the margins. For my own dear mother gave it to me, you'd never be able to guess how long ago, but years and years it was, before ever there was a motor-car on the streets of Dublin, or Mr. Murphy's beautiful trams, with the electricity streaming through them, that we're going on one of these days maybe, you and I, to the Park, maybe, to hear the lions roar at the Zoo and the crocodiles if they have any, or the Botanical Gardens, where Mr. Moore, Sir Frederick, I should say, makes the palm trees grow higher than they do at home in Africa or the Coral Islands of the South Sea, bubbles and all. . . . I often think of the inimitable goodness of God, making these coral islands out of nothing you may say for babies yet unborn and thousands of miles away anyway, to cut their teeth on. Oh, He's good to children surely, and to none more than me, for He gave me the best mother, I think ever was, and she gave me that beautiful book long before I had the sense to understand how fine it was, for I wasn't a clever fellow like you, my dotey boy, and she had to put me in the corner for three hours by an American clock she had that the more you wound it the less it went, for blueing Bluebeard's beard with a blue and red pencil I took off my father's desk. He was at the head of an office in Brunswick Street and would have been a very clever man

if he hadn't died. The Lord have mercy on him . . . and that reminds me you'd better not read *Bluebeard*, for it's hardly fit for a child, being too like what you come across every day. Of course there never was a man with a blue beard out of the Gaiety or the Theater Royal, but he was a bad Catholic even if his beard had been ordinary. . . . Gbd forgive me, but you might call him a perfect heathen if not a heretic. But I may be wrong about that."

Adam promised to be careful with the book and to refrain from reading *Bluebeard*, so Father Innocent left it in his hands, and he opened it at the title page to see that it was called *Mother Goose's Fairy Tales*, and at the top of it was written in a graceful, not too legible sloping hand, "To Innocent Mary Patrick Feeley, on his Sixth Birthday, from his Loving Parents, 12th October, 1880."

That was a gorgeous afternoon while he lay there cozily, after Father Innocent was gone, turning over the pictures, and discussing them with himself and sister whether he should begin with "The Goose that laid the Golden Eggs," or "Cinderella and the Glass Slipper," or "Jack the Giant-Killer," or "The Ugly Duckling," or "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp," or "Goody Two-Shoes," or "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," or "The Babes in the Wood," or what. He told her that he had promised Father Innocent not to read "Bluebeard," and pointed out to her the remains of the pigment which Father Innocent's mother had put him in the corner for applying to Bluebeard's beard. . . . Sister advised him also to pass over "The Babes in the Wood" for the



present, "For I'm sure I couldn't read it to you without crying myself," said she. "It's about little children that lost their parents."

Adam did not regard this as an overwhelming misadventure, but he had no more desire for tears than for horrors; so he eschewed the "Babes in the Wood" as readily as "Bluebeard." The sister then suggested as a novelty that he should begin at the beginning, and read "The Goose that laid the Golden Eggs," which was the very first story in the book, and seemed by the pictures to be agreeably bucolic and healthy in tone. She had an idea, or at least gave Adam that cheerful impression, that thanks to co-operation, geese laying golden eggs might yet be hatched in Ireland. Although he politely insisted on her continuing to read to him, and when his head ached, it soothed him to hear the drone of her voice he found that he really enjoyed the stories more when he spelled them out for himself; and, at the second reading, he covered the ground faster than she could read aloud.

All the stories were interesting and mildly exciting; though he thought their heroes very fatuous young gentlemen. "Jack the Giant-Killer" was the only one that showed striking intelligence, some of his ways of avoiding or circumventing leviathans might, he fancied, be tried against the police, should the like concatenation of circumstances present themselves: he noted with regret that John was an Englishman. A particularly silly fellow was the one who got the chance to wish himself anything under the sun and only used it to get himself

## MOTHER GOOSE'S FAIRY TALES

into worse trouble than he was in already. Adam had no patience with that fellow at all.

On the other hand, there was Aladdin. Adam felt special interest in him because he was the son of a tailor, a poor tailor, and lived in a great city, and had an uncle who went to Africa. The parallel with his own life ended there; for Aladdin was a wicked little boy who (it was implied, though not precisely stated in the text) played pitch and toss in the streets, and broke most of, if not all the Commandments. Almost the wonderfulest part of his story was that there was no mention of his parents smacking him with a porter bottle. Adam thought this a deplorable want of common sense on their part; yet it seemed to have had no ill effect on the development of Aladdin's character; for, notwithstanding his unpromising beginning, he grew up a well-spoken, modest, and charming young man, quite without blatherumskite, and as ingenuous as Father Innocent. It seemed incredible that he should have neglected to give the wicked magician penal servitude for life the moment he was freed from his power. That was asking for trouble later on. He would visualize the wicked magician as Old Comet, in a dressing gown, with a Turkish towel wrapped round his head, and a paralyzing smile of false benevolence playing over his countenance. . . . Then Adam would shudder and let fall *Mother Goose's Fairy Tales* from his hands; for he had neither ring nor lamp to protect him from those powers of darkness owning neither God nor man, though latent in the mind of all.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PRICE OF CONVALESCENCE

At last Adam was well enough not only to rise from his bed but to walk, and not only to walk but to dress and go out beneath the open sky. Though a cheerful enough little patient in his bed, he left it as one who has no will to live: he saw himself as flung out from fairyland to darkness. Between the sheets he was Haroun-al-Raschid, Commander of the Faithful; leaving them he must clothe his naked fancy in the rags of Adam the Dublin newsboy.

But the fairies had not left him yet. Instead of his rags sister gave him a suit that, if not new, was in perfect repair, and a little shirt and collar and eke a tie, with, most admirable of all, stockings, and a pair of boots. The latter were humanly speaking necessary; for after so long an illness his bare feet had lost their power of resistance to the stony ground. But Adam did not think so much of this comfort as of the distinction which they lent to his appearance. He tried to recall how they compared with Sammie Horgan's, and longed to be back at the Gresham Hotel to show them off. He did not, however, contemplate their effect on Count Street.

Before he was discharged from the hospital, Father Innocent was allowed to bring him, by way of an airing, for the long promised excursion to the Botanical Gar-

dens. It was a June day and balmy, so they climbed on top of the tram at the north end of Eccles Street, and off they went, swishing and roaring into the North Circular Road, and around to the left up over the canal bridge, and then round to the right at a place Father Innocent called "Dunphy's Corner," though there was nothing to indicate why it should so be called. But anyhow it was a notable spot; for there one pair of rails forged straight ahead to the left, to carry the Phoenix Park tram past the tram depot and the famous church of the Vincentians they were to visit some day, the tower of which might have fallen down if God had not held it up (said Miss or Mrs. Robinson, the Lord have mercy on her!), past the place where the cattle were killed (there was a flock of lambs on the road going there now, with queer red marks on their little gamey backs) to the place where the lions and tigers were: cruel beasts that ate you if they got the chance . . . only they never got the chance. It was satisfactory to remember that. They were in cages with iron bars, and even if they broke these when no one was looking in the night, they would still have to get out of their strong brick houses, and if they got out of them, there were fences and ditches and turnstiles (Father Innocent said a turnstile would almost surely baffle a lion or a tiger), and even if they got out of all the things that were put there to keep them in, they would then find the police from the constabulary depot drawn up outside, only too pleased to have something to shoot down. Adam carried the thought further still: even if they killed and ate the police, guns and powder and

shot and bayonets and belts and boots and helmets and all, that would be still no good; for they would have the Castle against them then, and sooner or later Old Comet would get them, with poisoned herrings, maybe, as you get rats.

Outside the public-house at Dunphy's Corner stood an empty hearse, and the like was to be seen at every place of entertainment in the Glasnevin Road. There were heaps more careering gaily home, the horses tossing their Grenadier caps in the air. Adam took off his cap to every one of them until Father Innocent bade him forbear. "My dotey boy," said he, "you needn't be taking a fresh cold for the sake of these hearses, any more than if they were so many wheelbarrows. While they hold the mortal remains of the faithful departed, we show them our respect; but empty, they are no more than empty dustcarts." He added, "Indeed, even with the coffins in them, I cannot see that they are much better than dustcarts then. But the Church sanctions the old custom of respecting the body even when it has ceased to be the temple of the soul."

"Why?" asked Adam; for as Father Innocent put it, he could not but feel that it was absurd.

"I am too ignorant to tell you why," the priest answered. "They may have told me at Maynooth, but I forget. Luckily I've no time to think about these things now; for when I was a young fellow there were heaps of them that seemed to me to be preposterous. Yet I heard men I know to be far wiser than myself maintaining them to be above question. The only course

for a good Catholic to follow is to believe what he is told by those above him without question."

"How do you mean those above him?" Adam queried anxiously.

The priest answered readily, "I mean those whom God in His wisdom has put over him, to be his natural superiors."

"But wouldn't that be the Castle?" Adam asked.

Father Innocent did not answer so readily this time; but he did offer an answer, "I'm afraid it would in a sense be the Castle in some ways," he admitted; "but only so long as the Castle told you to believe things that had the approval of the Pope." He corrected himself, "I ought to have said that even the Castle wouldn't dare to do anything at all without His Holiness's leave."

"How does it get it?" Adam insisted; "by humbugging him is it?"

"The Pope is infallible," quoth Father Innocent, with somewhat ruffled authority, "and couldn't be humbugged if he wanted to. But, of course, he can't be always thinking about Ireland which is quite a small part of his dominion and perhaps seems a poor little out of the way place that hardly matters to such a grand monarch as him: the grandest in the world, mind you, though he was once only a poor little priest like myself, only ever so much better and wiser." He stopped on this side track, but Adam was not to be balked.

"But sure, knowing everything, he must know the Castle's down on all Catholics?" he argued.

"You may be sure he doesn't know that," Father

Innocent hastened to say, "and you're wrong in thinking the Castle's down on all Catholics. There are Catholics earning as much as two or maybe three hundred pounds a year under the Government."

"Is there now really, your reverence?" asked Adam, tremendously impressed.

"Indeed there are," said Father Innocent. "Father Muldoon could tell you more about them than I. He has had boys under him, when he was rector at Clongowes, who are now making as much as a pound every day of their lives."

"I wonder could I ever earn the like of that," cried Adam, his mouth watering, like Ali Baba in the robbers' cave.

Father Innocent looked at him askance. "Would you be wanting to earn it from the Castle?" he inquired.

"It's a lot of money," Adam pleaded. "Couldn't I do a lot of good with that?"

"Think of all the harm the people do that would be giving it to you," the priest rejoined with absent-minded indignation.

"But doesn't the Pope tell them it's all right?" was Adam's instant reply. "And isn't anything wrong all right if he says so?"

"Being infallible," Father Innocent began, "he couldn't say that wrong was right. But of course bad men might deceive him as to the facts, and believing something was true that wasn't true, he might say something that would be perfectly true in itself, but not true because he had been told what wasn't true and believed it before

he said it, for of course though he's infallible that doesn't mean that he's infallible when he's being misled by bad men, as we may all be misled whether fallible or not . . ."

"And is God no more infallible than that?" Adam asked, with ill-disguised contempt.

"The infallibility of the Almighty differs from the infallibility of the Pope, I forget how," Father Innocent was saying, when luckily for him the tram grunted beneath them and came to a stop. "Here we are at the Botanic," he went on, "so ask me no more questions, my dotey boy. I tell you *I'm* a stupid fellow and know no more than yourself. And anyhow we're out to enjoy God's beautiful flowers and not to puzzle our heads about things that have no real concern for poor people like ourselves."

Adam was only too willing to forget questions of ethics and politics in the joy of bright color and fragrant scent, and eagerly clambered down from the tram roof, notwithstanding the difficulties presented by the fact that he had never done so before, even on his naked feet, and his boots felt as stilts might to the more luxurious. He reached the ground without mishap and hastened after his mentor through the gate by the lodge, where false pride inspired him to inscribe his name in the visitors' book while the custodian was engaged in conversation with Father Innocent. "That will do you now," cried the official when he realized, and Adam had got no further than the publication in capital letters of the words, ADAM BYRON O'TOOLE. . . . He left it at that, inadequate



as was the statement. He was dejected at the thought that the people who read the book would believe his name to be that of his godfather, though he had no greater satisfaction in that of Macfadden. But he wished there had been time to get in Wyndham, which had a grand sound, and above all, Innocent, really loved both for its sound and the connection it implied with his patron.

This day which had promised so brightly was perhaps the first of conscious disillusion in Adam's life. The very evergreens at the entrance depressed him, he was overpowered by the stifling odor of tropical vegetation, and the palm-houses frightened him so much that he clung to Father Innocent's hand as he passed through, dreading to see the fiery eyes of diabolical beasts glare through the foliage. He had never yet heard of ghouls by that name, yet they were ghoulish forms, he fancied, lurking amidst the odoriferous foliage around him. The heavy scents affected him much more than the occasionally brilliant colors, and he grew not sad only, but desolate. These plants came from Africa—Africa, where his uncle had disappeared. Africa, where perished that fated Irish baronet, Sir David Byron-Quinn.

Father Innocent wondered at his sullen answers when he called upon him to praise the glory of the Lord as illustrated in flower and leaf and spreading branch. He felt the boy trembling as though he had brought him to a Druid grove, where hung the stench of the sacrificed. He was turning to take him home, when he felt the grip on his arm grow easier, and Adam swung loose, a smile

breaking over his face. Three bars of well-marked brazen music filled their ears.

"Dear, dear!" said Father Innocent, "I near forgot the band. You'd like to hear the band, dotey?"

Adam owned he did love a band, and the priest's heart lightened to see him stride blithely forward, boots and all, towards the resounding blare of trombone and big drum. The conductor of the 22nd Princess Sarah of Cromwell's Own Lancers was giving the burgesses of Dublin the music they deserved. Adam, who savored the passion and death of Mark Antony through hearing "When Other Lips" tootled by an asthmatic drunkard on a disintegrating cornet, pressed the pace to where he glimpsed the redcoats in the bandstand, with the conductor's wand and white gloves beating the air over all. The priest was less excited, though the music pleased him with its vaguely familiar lilt: withal that, it might equally well have been Purcell or Bach or Sullivan or Strauss, for all he knew about it. Abruptly he halted, hindering Adam too. "My poor father!" he exclaimed.

The music had leaped like a dog out of water, with a shake and a splash, from a whining sentimental cadence to the smart tap of a martial air, and Adam was surprised to hear Father Innocent repeat, more or less in connection with the orchestral accompaniment:—

"Yes, let me like a soldier fall  
Upon some open plain,  
This breast expanding to the ball,  
To wash out every stain."

There were tears in his eyes as he took Adam's hand and moved on towards the bandstand. "Well I remember how my poor father used to sing that of an evening when he came back from the office, and now he's lying there." He waved his umbrella vaguely towards a wall bounding the promenade, where the band played and gaily dressed groups sauntered to and fro. Adam was about to ask how he could be over there, as he understood from previous reminiscences of the priest that he was long since in Heaven, but Father Innocent did not give him time, for, with an air of determined cheerfulness, he went on, "And well I remember my uncle, Father Dan, my mother's brother he was, saying, coming back from the funeral, 'If only poor Jim had expanded his breast to the air instead of singing about expanding it to the ball, we wouldn't be after burying him now.' He was a very humorous fellow was my uncle, Father Dan. He would have been a great man if he hadn't been so humorous. Some of his stories would make you laugh if I could remember them."

Adam was not in the mood for humorous stories. The music grew dull and distant in his ears as he envisaged the blank wall that bounded the promenade. "Where did you say your father is now?" he asked.

The priest lifted his hat. "The Lord have mercy on him! I believe he is in heaven with Uncle Dan," said he, "but his poor dust, as I tell you, lies over there beyond that wall."

"What's over there beyond that wall?" Adam inquired, with a frightened air.

"Come here till I show you," answered the priest, and led him up to the wall and lifted him in his arms so that he just peeped over the top. "Glasnevin Cemetery it is, where we laid your dear godmother, Miss Robinson, to rest a month ago." He lifted his hat to add, "May she rest in peace. Amen."

Adam echoed the Amen, shuddering convulsively. Was this immense, nasty-smelling stone-mason's yard, that stretched as far as the eye could reach, in a terrible monotony of ugly symbolism which turned even the primeval figure of the cross into a vulgar ornament for a rockery, that glorious garden that fronted the gates of heaven? Could poor Miss or Mrs. Robinson rest peacefully amidst such dismal sights? . . . What if, instead of getting better, he had died and been laid here to lie for ever and ever until the trump of Judgment Day?

A storm of questions crowded his lips to ask Father Innocent, but he was too frightened . . . too frightened for the answers. "That grand round tower you see, towering over all, is the O'Connell Monument, where Daniel O'Connell, who liberated us all, lies buried. But his heart's at Rome, where he was trying to go when God stopped him at Genoa to call him to Himself."

No generous emotion was roused in Adam's breast. He only wondered why ever the liberator's body was brought home all this long way, to be laid at last in this slough of despond. He said no word good or bad as the priest lowered him down and led him back towards the bandstand. He had lost all pleasure in the music

and stared, scandalized at the callousness and frivolity of the redcoats, whose business it was to kill people, affronting with their trumpets and drums the impotence of them beyond the wall, some of whom, he knew for certain, they or their brothers in arms had slain. He tried to convey this thought to Father Innocent, but failed and said no more.

Pained by his dogged silence, and alarmed lest he should have tired him, the little priest turned their steps homeward, and Adam heaved a sigh of relief as they passed the ominous evergreens and the prison-like gateway, and saw lumbering towards them that friendly giant, the tram. He longed to get back for what time he might to the world of Mother Goose, where none perished but the wicked, and not even they if they had the good luck to have a fairy take a fancy to them. He felt as he thought Moses must have felt when he rejoined his cheerful, if naughty companions after a prolonged scolding from Jehovah. Before the tram reached Dunphy's Corner he was asleep; and Father Innocent staggered with him in his feeble arms down Eccles Street and up the hospital steps.

"Sure he's twice the man he was when he came here," he said to the hall porter, who graciously accepted the statement as a compliment to himself and answered becomingly:—

"We do our best, but it's little thanks we get for it."

Father Innocent sighed and turned feet that ached worse than Adam's had ever ached, southwards toward Marlborough Street. He could afford no more trams

to-day. But anyhow Adam had enjoyed the band, and had seen the beautiful garden where that unfortunate saint, Emily Robinson, and his own good father and humorous Uncle Dan, and all the rest of the faithful departed were buried. What a good thing it was to be lying there with your body and your soul above with God!

In the hospital ward his little friend was fighting grimly with red ghouls to save another Adam that was and was not himself, lost in the black heart of a stifling dreamland, Africa. And then, as the little priest prayed for him, the tumult of battle died away and peace soothed the tiny brain. Father Innocent could do that for others he might not do for himself. Even through the night his own brain burned as his feet had burned throughout the day.

## CHAPTER XII

### IN DALKEY TUNNEL

THE morning after his outing with Father Innocent Adam awoke in abysmal dread; for he knew that his last days at the hospital were running out, and not even the pride of his new boots could sustain him against the thought of returning to Count Alley. Sister found him wanting in tenderness for his mother. She strove to waken his filial feeling, but Adam was too honest to affect what he had not. "If I were your mother it would hurt me to have a little boy like you," she said.

He looked at her from under his eyelids, and asked, "Why haven't you a little boy of any sort?"

She vouchsafed no reply, probably because her education led her to believe that the question was indelicate. Adam then remembered too late that Father Innocent had told him that to ask any question bearing on the facts of life was immodest, and he was very much distressed to think that sister might henceforth regard him not merely as impudent but depraved. Happily she knew far less about the matter than he. It faded at once from her mind, and to his relief, she kissed him as usual when she had heard him say his night prayers.

The next morning came a joyful surprise. After the doctor had sounded him with more than ordinary care,

he exchanged a roguish glance with sister, and said, "I can see this fellow's a great humbug."

"I've been thinking that myself," quoth sister.

"The place for him is not a hospital at all but a pirate ship stopping the packet in Dublin Bay," the doctor declared.

Adam grinned appreciatively. "Who's humbugging now?" he asked.

"Not me," the doctor protested. "I'm sure your proper place is on the rolling main, though you needn't stop the Royal Mail if you're too good a Catholic and devoted to the throne. But anyhow we've arranged for you to go and look at the main before embarking on it, just to see how you like it, at the end of this week. . . . Unless, of course," he added deferentially, "unless, of course, you'd prefer to go straight back to your home?"

"I'd rather be a pirate," said Adam promptly, throwing all scruple to the winds, though in cold blood he would have shrunk from the idea. Better to hang in chains in Execution Dock than repose in the bosom of his family.

So he found himself on the appointed day stepping into a vermilion cab before the hospital steps. It already contained two little girls, one notably thin, and an ample nun. Sister kissed him for the last time, and the horse proceeded to rattle the party in the most alarming fashion down bumpy Eccles Street, across the Drumcondra tram lines, past St. George's Church, into Gardiner's Place and Mountjoy Square, and down the hill to



the Custom House, and over Butt Bridge, past the Tara Street Baths, into Brunswick Street, and on to Westland Row Station, where the nun inquired anxiously of a porter for the 2.45 train to Bray.

He assured her that the two o'clock for Kingstown was but just gone, so she was in good time, being unencumbered with luggage save for a paper parcel or two, to take her tickets and shepherd her party up the steps to the departure platform.

They had, in fact, more than half an hour's leisure to admire the architecture of the station, and the triumphs of art over nature which it illustrated. To Adam, who knew it only by reputation, it was vastly interesting. Apart from the occasional arrival of a train or the passage of a light engine, there was the enduring interest of the permanent way, and above all, the bay where, thanks to a strike down the line, the coaches composing the Waterford Mail were lying, when they ought to have been one hundred and seventeen miles away, pulling themselves together for the return journey. This train made up of corridor carriages, was then and is now the latest achievement of the Dublin and South Eastern Railway Co. in the direction of luxurious transit. Not only did Adam demonstrate to his companions the marvelous construction of this apparatus and certain of its advantages on trips of such long duration, but he pointed out that the coach at one end of the train was numbered nineteen, and that at the other end was thirty-eight, and he revealed to them the remarkable truth that twice nineteen was thirty-eight, which the two little girls, and more par-

ticularly the thinner one, agreed was worthy to be noted, though not more noteworthy than Adam's mathematical skill, knowledge of the world, and pleasant conversation. They signified their approval to the nun and found she shared in it; for, unlike other little boys who had led their companions into mischief by playing hide-and-seek through an open door in the sacred train, he had beguiled the tedium of the party by purely intellectual means.

She reported to her superiors: "He talks like a book, he's as good as gold, and I think you might even leave him alone with most girls."

As a matter of fact, apart from passionate dream-romances, inspired by the icons in the Pro-Cathedral and the figures of pretty ladies in shop windows, Adam's main feeling towards the opposite sex was one of dread. His godmother he had loved and the sister who nursed him; but he thought of them as sexless as his mother whom, even to please Father Innocent, he could not bring himself to love. The girls round Count Street despised him for his timidity towards themselves, and took advantage of it to tease him even in the Pro-Cathedral during mass. He did not mind this, once the time came for him to go to Confession; for he learned from Father Innocent that it is better to be tormented by little girls in this world than by demons in the next.

But these were nice little girls that were traveling with him down to Bray, though both were dressed in a manner which indicated a rank in society above his

own, they were as respectful as the ladies who walked with Dante. One of them was called Anastatia Fallon. She was about his own age, but stunted, and talked through her nose, yet he thought her the prettier of the two; for she had a lovely pink complexion and curly fair hair, adorned with ribbons of more than one color. The other was older than he by perhaps two years or more, and taller, he feared much taller. She was very slim, and her legs, of which he saw a good deal, markedly thinner even than his own. She was not so gaily dressed as Miss Fallon, being in a sort of mourning that had the air of permanence, nor had she her obvious attractions; she was very dark, with beetling brows and thick eye-lashes over greeny brown eyes, and long black hair like a hearse horse's tail, and a sallow skin. She might have attracted him had they been alone, but compared with Miss Fallon, she seemed to him elderly and plain. Her name, he heard with little interest, was Caroline Brady.

At last the 2.45 rumbled in from over the river and ten minutes packed with excitement followed as they clutched their parcels and scrambled for places in a third-class compartment. Then its engine snorting fiercely against the roof, it started laboriously to rumble out again, gathering speed as it crashed over ingenious catch-points, past docks and canals and gasometers, through lowly Ringsend and lordly Lansdowne Road, and comfortable Sidney Parade, and abandoned Merrion, and rushed headlong (to judge by the noise it made) round the skirts of Dublin Bay to Blackrock. Adam had never

beheld the sea, and at the first doubtful glimpse—for the carriage was full and he sat in the middle with his back to the engine, he took the hill of Howth for some misty and terrible monster of the deep. It seemed odd that no one noticed the apparition but himself. He feared he might be suspected of cowardice if he made a fuss about it, so, praying that the horrific beast might be left behind before they reached Bray, he said nothing, but turned his eyes landward where they were comforted by the sight of the familiar Kingstown tram bustling along not far from the train and nearly as fast.

At Blackrock some one got out and he was able to stretch his neck far enough to see, ere they ran into Kingstown, that Howth Head was not a leviathan but a promontory. Kingstown, he could see, was a very important place, there was more bustle and noise there than at Blackrock, and almost as much as at Westland Row, and an engine on another line taking water, and a dull gray building with a mast in the garden and a white flag with a red cross on it or some other foreign device, also there were glimpses of steamers and of sailing ships with their noses cocked over the wall to look at you, and such other things as you might see in and about the Liffey, as you gazed down it from Butt Bridge, and the same smell of tarry rope and bilge water, only with a fresh sea smell mixed up with it. He recalled that Kingstown was the port from which his semi-mythical uncle sailed to Africa. Perhaps also Sir David Byron-Quinn?

Four people got out and only one got in, so the little

party could sit together and take their ease, and Adam was now next the corner seat where sat Miss Fallon. When the train jolted over the pier junction, switch in the cutting, he put his hand on her knee to steady himself, and it felt very pleasant, but he knew that he ought not to find it so, and edged away from her, though not far. His face was still flushed when they reached the full light of day at Sandy Cove, and he had a feeling that Miss Brady looked at him as if she knew what he was trying not to think of, and might tell their custodian if he were so unfortunate as to forget himself again. But Miss Fallon was eating sweets and taking no notice of him or any one else, so perhaps he had really been only dreaming in that queer way he had, particularly since he had been in hospital.

Leaving Sandy Cove, he perceived that they were now approaching the heart of the country; there was no more sign of a tram, the cuttings were no longer lined with masonry but sloping grass, gemmed with wild flowers and the air had a quality quite unknown to him. At Glenageary two more passengers got out, and at Dalkey they were left in sole possession of the compartment.

Adam rose and stretched his legs. These railway journeys, however full of promise of the most enthralling adventure, were in some ways more trying than he had foreseen. He was glad to be able to move about and take a peep at the great world flying past. How quiet these girls were: girls never took an interest in anything. Yet he was liking girls very much to-day, particularly his traveling companions, particularly Miss Fallon. He

would sit right away from Miss Fallon that he might be able to tell Father Innocent that he really was a good boy and grateful to God for sending him first to that dear hospital and afterwards to Bray; that would be almost nicer, perhaps, if only there were such a kind lady as sister there. The nun with them now was all right, as nuns went, but she was not like sister and could not be if she tried. He would never want to kiss her as he kissed sister. He would hardly want to kiss her at all. He would rather kiss . . . he must try not to think of that, though what harm was there in it after all? . . . Sister would never do anything wrong, yet she had kissed him heaps of times . . . he thought she was going to cover him with kisses sometimes. . . . But he thought wrong, for she never did. All this he thought as he tottered to the open window at the far side of the carriage. He looked out just in time to see that the train was approaching a mountain. Suddenly the engine whistled and they were whirled into darkness.

For a moment Adam was terrified! He felt something creeping towards him while he thought the boards below him threatened to split beneath his feet. The thing near him was human, female, Miss Fallon, who had come to him for protection. She had offered him none of her sweets, but never mind. She was close behind him, he put out a hand to steady her as he had used her knee a little while since to support himself. The hand slipped round her body, she was not so plump as he had thought. The carriage was rocking wildly now, they both rocked to and fro with it, the wheels ground and growled fero-

ciously beneath their feet, no wonder if she was frightened, he must make her feel that he could keep her safe. She could not hear him speak, though he put his head forward where he thought her ear should be. He found it close to her body, kissing it. He had not meant to do this, he hoped she had not felt anything, he tried to find her ear to explain when her lips suddenly descended from quite a long way and rested for an ecstatic instant upon his. . . . There was a blaze of dazzling light. The nun, screening her eyes, was gazing in rapt admiration on the sea between her and Bray Head, Miss Fallon was sitting opposite her gnawing chocolate, and beside Adam stood Miss Brady, with rather a pretty color mantling her sallowness as she stared out of the window that rushed past the inland rocks.

"Come and look at Killiney Bay," said the nun, calling them over without her eyes quitting the cherished view. "Isn't it lovely?" . . . The tension was broken. Adam said it was the loveliest thing he had ever seen, which was quite true. And Miss Brady in a subdued voice agreed with him. Miss Fallon said nothing, her mouth being full of chocolate.

Then followed another station that seemed almost to rise from the sea itself, but was not very busy; and then the train, after a serious conversation between the engine-driver and the station-master, who was perhaps reproving him for coming so fast down the gradient from Dalkey, puffed out mighty slowly and cautiously on the single track which carried them past derelict Ballybrack and the Martello tower, and another set of bumping

points, and the wreckage of prehistoric colliers and a level crossing into the sought-for haven of Bray.

And then there was the culminating excitement of collecting the paper parcels for the last time, and Adam clambering up on the seat to get the nun's umbrella and very nearly succeeding in doing so, and the tumbling off the seat into the arms of Miss Brady, and being helped by her out of the train, but disengaging her hand to walk across the platform for himself into the vehicle that stood waiting for them there, not unlike a cab but called a "brome," which carried them across the very rails they had traveled over in the train, and bowled them gaily along the sea front (called the esplanade, which gave it the delightful effect of being in an entirely foreign country like Africa, only handier to get at), where a band in dark green uniforms was playing "Patrick's Day in the Morning" to an assembly even more fashionable, to judge from its brilliant costumes, than that which he had seen taking their lugubrious and deceitful pleasure in the Botanical Gardens. And behind all this was the magnificent background of the open sea, stretching away to Africa and America, and he could not at the moment remember where else. And on it were the white sails of ships, apparently motionless like the ships in the picture shops, going nowhere with spreading sail to catch the windless air. How lovely it all was! more like heaven than, he thought, anything on earth could possibly be.

There he sat in the lordly equipage, with his back to the gallant horse, Miss Fallon beside him, sweet-bag in hand and Miss Brady's knees deliciously tickling his and



adding to the heavenliness of it all; while, from time to time, the nun smiled upon him, benignly as though to thank him for being such a good little boy.

And he smiled back a little wanly; for, after all, he had no confidence in his own virtue, and this heaven was the pagan heaven of his dreams and not the tedious place advertised in the holy Catechism. But he was going to be exquisitely happy in it; for, whatever it was, it transcended the promise of *Mother Goose's Fairy Tales*. The Princess Badroul Badour was a pale shade compared with either Anastatia Fallon or Caroline Brady, and when he found himself tucked in bed, the dark of the night served but to prolong to the infinite extension of dreamland the mystical light in darkness of Dalkey Tunnel.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL

WHEN Adam again took observation of his surroundings he found that he was one of four boys in a dormitory at Saint Morwenna's Convalescent Home, conducted by the religious of that charitable order. The other three boys, though they had the advantage of him in age and social position, proved to be his inferiors in intelligence, and of lower vitality, so he held his own against them, though experience taught him to baffle their researches into his birth and lineage. Even those in authority knew little about him beyond that he was a protégé of a well-known physician, and that the nun who brought him down from Dublin expatiated on his good behavior, a judgment borne out by every evidence; for he gave less trouble than any equally lively inmate of the home. This held good not only of his conduct but of his health, which the sea winds blew to a rich glow, and he visibly waxed in height and girth. Altogether it was a pleasure to have a boy like Adam, who was a credit in every way and even willing to be clean.

To Adam the convalescent home, with its outlook on the sea and its beeswaxed rooms full of sunshine and fresh air, was a terrestrial paradise. For the joy of

dwelling there he faced without demur the cruel ordeal of walking into the sea until it covered his knees and then dropping down in it backwards (with all its dread association with his escape from drowning in Fitzwilliam Square), until it covered his head and the salt water bubbled in his nose and mouth, forcing a passage to his inmost parts. Three days later he voluntarily jumped off the springboard into four feet of turning tide and was rescued with difficulty, and alternately smacked and kissed by the bathing woman, a lady of kind heart, but, he regretfully observed, not young for her age, nor even showing traces of past beauty. Within a week from that he could swim several strokes, if only to escape her caresses. Now that he had regular meals to support his courage, he was, as his poor godmother had boasted, as brave as a lion: the lion of unembroidered fact, be it understood, not that of fiction, which is an unnatural beast.

Even paradise, however, he found wanting in perhaps the greatest joy he had been led to look for in it. The morning of the first day, he saw Caroline Brady and Anastatia Fallon only at a distance. They smiled and nodded to him, and he fancied Caroline was wishful to speak; but to speak she had no chance. She was holding herself badly this morning, as though too tall for her strength, and was hollow-eyed and her sallowness was palely green. Anastatia was certainly the prettier of the two: there were only five of the girls he found prettier than Anastatia. He got the chance to talk to one, but timidity or unwillingness to lose his reputation, or

a feeling that he ought to be faithful to Anastatia and Caroline, nipped desire in the bud. The next day he saw Anastatia without Caroline, and, having some moments' talk with her on the beach (for he was already known to be trustworthy), he learned that Caroline was ill. He wished to know more, but Miss Fallon said nothing of interest beyond that her own father was sole proprietor of a tobacconist's shop in Clarendon Street, and she had no notion where Miss Brady came from but that her father was not his own master, for Caroline had to get up in the morning to help her mother to get his breakfast for him, as he had to be somewhere long before Miss Fallon's father found it necessary to inquire into the doings of the tobacco world. She guessed Miss Brady's age at seventeen (she had such grown-up ways), and supposed Adam himself to be twelve or more, he knew so much. This was flattering, but Adam, despite her generous coloring, perceived that she was greedy; for, even now, with all her friendliness, she offered him none of the chocolate she was for ever eating. When he turned to leave her she followed him, but was called back by a nun, whom he heard gustily reproaching her as a "bold, forward child." He thought her nothing of the kind, but merely dull; realizing now that it was only Caroline that had thrilled him and not the pair of them as he had at first supposed.

He was sorry that Caroline was ill, but now that she was no longer to be seen in this great healthy world of sunlit greensward, weedy rock, and sand, and tumbling sea, his interest in her waned, until, towards the end of

his term at Bray, her image sprang upon him in the night and haunted him till dawn.

And then at last came doomsday, appropriately dark and cloudy, with spouting of cold rain, when he was declared to be sound and whole and fit in every way to be handed over for sacrifice on the parental altar in the foul alley off Count Street. He bade farewell to his partners in the dormitory with an emotion that surprised them, for they had accounted him, despite his amiability, as aloof and priggish; and seeing Miss Fallon, he ran up to her and incontinently kissed her. She was on the point of giving him a crack off her chocolate then, had he not confused her mind by saying, "You'll give my love to Caroline Brady, won't you?"

Whereupon she replied, "Carrie's gone long ago. They couldn't keep her, she was so bad. She's maybe dead by this," and from force of habit she put the chocolate intended for Adam in her own mouth. There was no "brome" to-day to beguile Adam's melancholy. He was marched to the station in company of another boy under a big umbrella, which a nun he did not know held over them both. When they turned their backs to the esplanade, at the railway crossing by the station, all hope seemed left behind. The station itself was wet and dismal, even their engine bumbled in with a hang-dog air, and rain trickled off the carriage roofs as though they mourned the fate that recalled them to Dublin.

Tears of self-pity welled in Adam's eyes as they puffed

out from beside the hoarding that advised him that he ought to carry his custom to Clery's, caught a last glimpse of the hotels about the level crossing, and jolted on past the backs of houses, over a bridge, and so on by the lost argosies and, leaping the mouth of a tiny stream he had not noticed on the downward trip, on to the single track to Killiney. He had no heart to look farther on the beloved sea he was leaving now, he supposed, for ever, so he sat with downcast eyes, his right hand on his ear and the elbow resting on the window ledge. Thus conveyed to his brain, the thudding of the flatted wheels beneath his feet beat out a melody not to be distinguished by him from St. Patrick's Day, as he had heard it that first unforgettable hour bowling along the sea front at Bray. Life, though sad, remained of interest, almost in spite of himself.

The train stopped: Killiney. The engine drew a long breath and shook itself before starting again to climb up to Dalkey Tunnel. Then amidst encouraging shouts of "right away" and whistles great and small, the stern ascent began. Adam's eyes were carried seaward by a trail of smoke that ran its curly way from the little headland by Sorrento away to the very circle bounding the waters, for the clouds had blown away for a moment and the east was blue. He found it pleasant to tell himself that this smoke was from his friend the Bristol boat, the only ship that had a personality for him, starting on that wondrous voyage he would so love to make. . . . And even as he fancied himself Sindbad the Sailor, avid only for maritime adventure, he found him-

self in the darkness of Dalkey Tunnel, kissing the passionate ghost of Caroline Brady.

Emerging to daylight, the nun, not altogether unobservant, wondered why he had lost his color, and asked if he were frightened by the tunnel. He assured her he was not, but, dreading a collapse, she watched him closely. It struck her that he was different from any other boy of whom she had found herself in charge, but failed to tell herself wherein the oddity lay. Gradually his color returned and when they reached Westland Row, she felt justified in allowing him to travel on alone to Tara Street, while she brought the other boy to his home on the south side.

Even the increasing volume of the railway traffic as they approached the metropolis could not cheer Adam's foundered spirits and, though he had often dreamed of the day when he might hope to look down on Westland Row and Brunswick Street from the railway bridges; to-day, he forgot to attempt to do so. At Tara Street he climbed slowly out of the carriage and descended among the pillars supporting the soul-devastating edifice, as if descending into his sepulcher.

How gray, how greasy, how joylessly noisy the streets were! How ugly Butt Bridge! How heavy with disillusion the railway viaduct! How bleak the coloring of the Custom House! And how disappointing of the Bristol boat to be lying there in front of it, when his one agreeable thought that day, save the mad, bad thought of Caroline in the tunnel, had sailed in her out across the bay to the only certain glory of the unknown. Even that

Garden of Eden called Bray had serpents lurking in its undergrowth. Caroline Brady had been expelled for being too ill, and he for being too well. And worse was their fate than the first Adam's and his Eve's; for they had not known the full savor of any fault, nor had they now the solace of each other's company.

Company? . . . Would he ever have the mysterious Caroline's again? If she were in her grave would he willingly join her there? . . . What sort of a thing was a grave when you looked inside it? Would it matter what it was like if only she were there with him too? . . . Surely not, nothing could matter at all, he thought, if only he could be with Caroline Brady. . . . He turned aside at the north end of Butt Bridge to contemplate the waters that drowned Fan Tweedy. . . . If only they had been rising, with the tide fresh and green from the sea! But the current was running out, muddy as the gutters of Marlborough Street. . . .

Besides even in death with all its risks, he could not count on finding Caroline again . . . perhaps she was still alive. She was very ill, said that other girl, but that did not say she was dead. He had been very ill a few weeks ago, yet here he was now, feeling more alive than he had ever felt before. On the other hand, there was Miss or Mrs. Robinson. Father Innocent had spoken of her illness much as Anastatia Fallon had spoken of Caroline Brady's, and she had died right enough and been buried in that awful place beyond the walls at the Botanics. Adam shuddered at the thought of Caroline lying there, of lying there himself,



even beside her; better to be carried on these muddy waters out to sea. But if the sea held not Caroline, what then? . . . It all seemed hopeless, except that he felt himself alive and well, so very much alive, so very well. On the whole he wanted to be alive, but he did not want to be well, he wanted to be ill, and enjoy again the past eight weeks, the only weeks of his life that had been worth living.

A sickening crash against the right side of his head wakened him from his reverie. His father towered above him, an empty pipe in his mouth; very drunk was he and livid with rage. "Is this where I find you, my fine fellow?" he roared, "when you ought to be off out working for your living. Was it to idle I bred you, was it?" . . .

A blow on the left cheek followed. Adam made a frantic plunge for freedom at any price, towards the water's edge; but a third blow stopped him, and as he yet reeled under it, a fourth drove him back towards Count Street as sheep are driven towards the North Circular Road.

So was Adam welcomed home.

## CHAPTER XIV

### MR. MACFADDEN IS DISPLEASED BY HIS FAMILY AND THE ABBEY THEATER

ACCORDING to our lights, we do not see it to be the province of the artist to paint in detail the merely sordid. It is his duty to realize the worst for himself, but he must be careful how he allows that dread knowledge to color his narrative, lest he suffer his reader to see the broad ocean of life as a mere whirlpool of despair. If his experience lead him so to regard it, let him cherish the logic of silence, and refrain from adding another stone to the monument of nothingness. He that despairs is logically dead: if he live, his life is a farce and the expression of his opinions an impertinence.

It is unnecessary to pursue Adam to the family rat-hole off Count Street, where his good mother awaited him, to point with her tongue the moral lesson crudely outlined by his father's fists. On one excuse or another, he had idled two months of the best season of the year and lived on the fat of the land; while his father's affairs had been going from bad to worse, so that he might be sitting drinking porter all day for all the tailoring he had to do. To prove that this was no overstatement of the possibilities of the case, he did so most days. Consequently of his stock-in-trade barely

a pair of shears remained unpawned or unclaimed by creditors. It was now for Adam promptly to set to work, to restore the house his father was pulling about their ears.

Whether Mrs. Macfadden really believed a child of Adam's age could perform this miracle was not definitely stated by her, but she was wroth with him for leaving her so long alone with her husband, who now vented on her all the cruelty and suspicion the main burden of which had for some years been borne by her son. She could no longer come and go without question, every movement was watched. She could not count even on drunkenness keeping him quiet, for alcohol was distilled in Malachy's liver less into intoxication for his limbs than rage for his heart. One night he caught her coming out of a public-house: forbidden ground for her unless in his company or on his errands. A terrible scene followed, so bad that she would have left him altogether but for sheer laziness and a superstitious dread of the consequences. It was better to live with Macfadden than to be killed by him, for he was one of those proud men who would rather be hanged for killing their wives than acknowledge the precedence of another in their wives' affections.

In this particular Mr. Macfadden justly claimed all the finest feelings of a gentleman; but his wife, though she bowed to his will, deeming death the worst of all evils, despised the man for his foolishness in expecting her to find him money for drink when she dared not go where she might earn it. He had come to persuade

himself that it was Adam who of late had made the money that kept them; at all events he refused to see where else it came from. It saved her some degree of persecution to agree that things would be all right when Adam was back at work again.

So once again Adam went selling papers outside the Gresham Hotel, and, with his decenter appearance and greater knowledge of life, drove a better trade than any of the other boys, honest or otherwise; and drove it too, without exciting their ill will; for any special wind-falls he shared with his friends Patsy Doyle and Big Finegan, or even others with less claim upon him, if he thought them decent fellows and out of luck. Simultaneously, whether through his exertions or not, the fare at Mr. Macfadden's table improved and his most essential implements were released from pawn; so that he was able to execute, in his fashion, an order that opportunely arrived.

Now this order was for a sort of light colored long cloth coat, the sort of thing a gentleman of sporting taste, not too professedly a sportsman, might wear at a race meeting; and one might think that it showed Mr. Macfadden had still some chance of making his way in the sartorial world. But there was a fly in the ointment; for the order was given by Mr. O'Toole who had somehow got on in the world, while Mr. Macfadden was drifting so far backwards that he could no longer afford to reject advances even from him.

The coat was finished and damned by Mr. O'Toole with faint praise; but it was paid for, and being paid

for, proved to be Mr. Macfadden's last artistic triumph; for it provided him with a whole golden sovereign and some shillings for drink, and what could Mr. Macfadden do with the money of that dirty though victorious dog of a Byron O'Toole but drink it? Adam was present at the discussion between his parents as to the apportionment of this money. His mother said that the sovereign must go in rent. His father answered briefly: "Rentmiyelbo!" and stumbled downstairs. He had already been drinking then; but Adam thought nothing of that; for he never saw him now that he had not been drinking, the moment drink was to be had.

Besides, Adam was full of himself to-day, for it was his ninth birthday, and he had determined, though the sky fall, to treat himself to the Pictures at the Rotunda. This last year Father Innocent's influence on him had been weakened by the freethought of the streets, though he had lost nothing of the boy's respect for his saintly character; and Adam, though he knew it not, was passing through a phase of Hedonism. Little cared he whether his father was drunk or sober, so long as he did not interfere with him. He even found himself laughing contemptuously to see his great body go floundering and lurching up Count Street in front of him, as though the devil were driving from behind rather than luring from ahead. It was nearly an hour past sunset and the public-houses were lighting up. One of them was called Clarence Mangan's, and he knew his father never went there now, having quarreled with the manager, Adam knew not why. As he expected, Mr. Macfadden shambled past it,

then suddenly stopped, pulled off his hat to scratch his head, and, giving Adam barely time to flee out of his way across the street, turned back and went in.

Adam's mind was cleared of all hankering for the Pictures by a scream that followed instantly, as his mother burst out through the public-house doors, as one shot from a cannon, her face bruised and bleeding, and his father hot on her track clouting her as he had clouted Adam all the way home from Butt Bridge, only with a more rabid violence and the greater ease in as much as he could hit straighter from the shoulder without leaning down. In the background hovered a rather well dressed man, babbling mildly, "But all the same, you know, there's no call to do that."

For once Mr. Macfadden refrained from his usual form of repartee. He seemed to be sparing his breath, that he might drive his wife with the greater force before him, and stagger after her with the closer resentment. Just once he threw the white of his eye over his shoulder at the man, who thereupon walked off as fast as he could go, and in the direction opposite to that of the Macfaddens. Adam's instinct was to do the same, leaving his parents once more to fight out their quarrel without allowing himself to be made a whipping boy for either; but a shriek from the alley down which they had disappeared called him, as he thought no word of hers could call him to his mother's help. He bounded towards the sound like a young wild cat and came up with the pair as they were struggling at the hall door of the house in which they lived. His mother's shawl had somehow

caught in the railing, and she clung there helplessly, while his father battered her with his blows, which he directed now on her body with sickening thuds as though the bones were breaking beneath her thick flesh.

"Help!" she cried hoarsely. "Murder, he's meaning to kill me."

"And if I am that," roared her husband, "I'd like to see the one that's going to offer to help you." And indeed there was no offer; for though many windows were thrown up and much interest shown, what was there after all to do? It was only Macfadden beating his wife. Every one knew why.

But to Adam it was a battle cry: the cry of that woman, who for good or evil, had given him life and now was in fear of losing her own: for Macfadden he had no feeling but hatred, contempt, and savage terror: terror so great that he dared not revenge his own wrongs. But to save his mother he would face Macfadden and the devil too. Without a thought of his own danger he rushed upon him and struck the only blow that can avail a child against a man: with his stoutly booted right foot in the pit of his father's stomach.

There was a roar of delight, mixed with religious disapproval, from the denizens of Count Alley, as Mr. Macfadden went for an instant to earth, in a stupor of drink, rage, and pain. Then he rose to his largest self with a yell: "Bloody parricide!" he bellowed; "let me do for him first and that rollicking mother of his after."

But he was confronted by the closed and bolted hall door; for Adam (become in his own brain Jack the

Giant-Killer) had torn his mother's shawl from the railing and pushed her through to the foot of the stairs, then turned and closed the way behind them, ere Mr. Macfadden had recovered from the first shock of the assault. He flung himself against it and it threatened collapse. Upstairs Adam, hearing the great weight batter against it, recalled how Sinbad (following Ulysses) had disabled the monster who ate his companions, and thrust the poker in the fire: the rage of the man below was at a heat less white and blasting than his own. Here was not only hate, but hate fed with imagination, that flung all cosmos into the fray. But he was not called by fate to do execution on the ruffian whose name he bore.

The landlord, or more likely his deputy, for he had a heavyweight prizefighter's nose, thrust an impressive head up from the area. "That'll do you now, that'll do you. Lave my dure alone!"

"Duremiyelbo!" Mr. Macfadden bellowed back at him with a splendid gesture of defiance; but pain and surprise had sobered him enough to realize that his ship was almost on the rocks; for although you may trounce your wife and children in Count Street to your heart's content, property there has rights as sacred as in Merrion Square. A policeman, who had ignored the screams of Mrs. Macfadden as merely harmless local color, suddenly sailed into the alley. Making himself look as big as possible, he bore down on Mr. Macfadden.

"What's all this about?" he demanded, twirling his mustache, the better to conceal an irrepressible twitching of his lips, as he realized the fighting form of the



beast he had to do with. "What's all this, my man? Not in trouble, I hope. . . . No drink taken, eh?"

The tailor's eyes slowly measured the policeman from head to foot, and a sly merriment glittered in it, as he reflected that he could kill him with one sledgehammer blow not far from the place where he himself still smarted from his son's foot; but he had the Castle behind him and maybe a sergeant or two waiting round the corner, so there was no good in that. Mr. Macfadden was determined that his charity should begin nearer home. He thrust his pipe with an abrupt movement in his mouth and produced a matchbox. Then at last, with leering deference, he made answer.

"Sure some one's been humbugging you, sergeant dear. It's little trouble we ever have down here. There's no rough element in Count Alley."

The sergeant gained false confidence from this disclaimer. "Will you tell me now that I didn't hear the voice of a female raised aloud and catch you mishandling that door with your boots?" he demanded.

"Ah, sure, not at all," retorted the tailor. "If you will want me to advise you about my family business wasn't I just for belting my young bastard for turning against his ma, and he up and banged the door in my face, there, so that I slipped and fell, and wasn't I fool enough getting up to hit it a kick, thinking that was the easiest way to open it with my hand hurted in the fall. And then this gentleman objected, as he had a right to, seeing that it's his duty to see the property is not deteriorated, and thinking that by mischance I might kick

it off the hinges." His eye sought and found the policeman's. "I do kick cruel hard, sergeant, that's my misfortune, and that's a fact."

The policeman's hand flew from his mustache to the chain of his whistle. "I hope it's the truth you're telling me now?" he blustered.

Mr. Macfadden laughed in his face. "As if I'd tell a grand man like yourself a bloody lie!" He waved his hand with the pipe in it towards the now crowded windows. "Ask all these ladies and gentlemen whether I'm the man to tell you a bloody lie."

"Not so much language, my man," growled the policeman, anxious with the knowledge that he was losing control of the situation.

"Languagemiyelbo!" retorted Mr. Macfadden, with a sudden recrudescence of triumphant drunkenness, calling on him to draw blood then and there. The audience strained forward thinking now that for the honor of his cloth the policeman must surely try to take him. The weights were not unequal, the constable was sober, and if the tailor had the greater strength and the longer reach, the policeman had his baton, if only Macfadden was not too quick to let him draw it. They could see that he was doubting whether he would draw baton or whistle first, and that something desperate in the leering face above the limp but muscular body kept him inert. He dared not make himself ridiculous in the sight of all by calling for help before he was touched or even directly threatened by the drunken tailor. So they stood at bay, the policeman, as the onlookers were rejoiced for no defined

reason to observe, in the less dignified attitude of challenge. At last Mr. Macfadden, with the open insolence of victory cheaply won, went on, "As I was saying, when you interrupted me, inspector dear, these ladies and gentlemen will tell you that I'm the amiblest fellow in Dublin and never kilt a bobby yet, and wouldn't unless I was contraried. And I'm off now to drink your honor's health in a drop of Guinness at my own expense, just to show I'm not a bit offended at all at all with you for staring at me as hard as if I was a bloody woman from round the corner that you'd maybe get the better of if she'd let you." He touched his hat and strode past him and away with a firm enough step, amidst roars of laughter at the discomfiture of the policeman.

The latter, determined to have the last word as the only possible step towards the recovery of his prestige, called after him, "I can smell the drink on you from here." But Mr. Macfadden replied merely with a gesture which did not necessitate the turning of his head, and disappeared. Thereupon the constable stepped out briskly with the air of being about to do great things round the corner, but was careful on reaching it to pretend to see him escaping in the direction which he had not taken. And that policeman had acted for the best in his own interests; had he crossed Mr. Macfadden further to-night he would have sacrificed himself on the altar of duty, and few policemen feel their wages to be high enough to support this altruism.

Though on fire with drink and not to be stayed alive by the arm of the law, Malachy Macfadden walked cir-

cumspectly now. He was not looking for vulgar trouble, rather was he on his guard against its surprising him while he bent his mind on higher things. He was thinking how soon it would be possible to go back and visit with certainty and free from all chance of interference upon his wife and son, his wife and her son, heaven's wrath for their conspiracy in witchcraft and rebellion. He besought his special Providence (for he was a damnably devout man and never more so than when he felt the emotions which we are taught belong to God alone), to tell Him, as between master and servant, if there had ever been such a Christian martyr as himself. 'And his special Providence, made in his own image, assured him there was not; so his case called for special judgment such as the common law does not provide. His rage was directed mainly against his wife; for he could not imagine the meek and futile Adam, fit only to sell newspapers, venturing of his own accord to stand against him. He blamed her at once for two deadly if incompatible crimes: firstly that she had inspired his own son to rise in open insurrection against him, and secondly for being the mother of this son whom he saw now not to be his. "It was she that learned her bastard to kick his own da," he mumbled, as he strode. "It was she that learned him to kick his da where he did. Faix, I'll kick her where she'll never bear another bastard!" and his eye saw the room where Adam was born strewn with his mother's gore.

These are hungry thoughts for a strong man. He went into a tavern on the quay and ate and drank,

without allowing himself to get more drunk, then he swung into the street and crossed Butt Bridge; with a notion of finding on the south side some place of entertainment other than a public-house. The music halls he tried were full, or those in charge of them said so to Mr. Macfadden, perceiving him to be approaching that happy state. Attracted by a placard in Hawkins Street announcing Mr. Oswald Onsin's London Company in the enormous success from the Grand Theater, London: "What Rot," by Oswald Onsin, "Produced by Oswald Onsin," he lumbered to the gallery pay-box of the Theater Royal and demanded "sixpennyworth of your bloody rot," but the check taker at the top of the stairs, supported by a policeman, declined to admit him, and, receiving back his money, he retired under cover of a fire of epigrams in which the name of the advertised author of the play became Mr. Oscar Miyelbo. He was the more provoked because at the very bottom of the gallery steps was exhibited a most intriguing picture of a lady wearing a tall hat and pyjamas, pursued by a gentleman in frilly nightdress. Above this picture were printed boldly the words, "What Rot," and beneath: "Who can stop It?" And as he gazed on it the great heart of that patriotic Irishman, Malachy Macfadden was conscious of a feeling in common with the great heart of the British public; he would, however, have denied it.

He wandered on into Brunswick Street to see what was doing at the Queen's. It was closed, so he turned back again and crossed Butt Bridge and Beresford Place. There was a crowd there, a very modest one, listening

to a short man with a black mustache who addressed them from the steps of Liberty Hall, using language not in Mr. Macfadden's vocabulary. So Mr. Macfadden just roared "Libertymiyelbo!" at him and passed on into Abbey Street . . . There on his left hand he caught sight of yellow bills, such as those which had attracted Adam's curiosity many months before. They stood outside a building he still remembered as the Morgue. He used to go there often when he was a lad, to see the coroner's jury sitting on sailors and women dragged out of the river, or murdered down the quayside as far as the North Wall. Once he had been called in as a jurymen himself, as he was passing by on urgent business, going to back Father O'Flynn for the Grand National, no less, that had cost him thirty-five shillings or more, and all to sit on a blasted baby that had been dug out of a sewer under Mecklenburg Street. What fools men were! How they wasted their time and other people's money! Now the place was turned into a queer sort of theater, not a real theater like the Queen's, where you could see a railway engine running over a policeman, or the British Army scuttling for life from a patriot in a green tie, but where they spouted like street preachers and see-sawed with their hands. He remembered once on a Bank Holiday, seeing the word, "Kincora" on the bills. He was with two other fellows who had a sup taken and they all thought Kincora must be about a lad drinking Mooney's whisky, and either getting funny on it or going grand and mad; so they all paid sixpence each and went in. But sure it was nothing of the kind. The place was as dismal

as a methody chapel and not a soul scarcely in it but an old Protestant clergyman asleep in the stalls! As for the play, you couldn't make head or tail of it, except that the leading character let on to be called King Brian Boru, and talked as if he were tipsy, but he said nothing about drinking Kincora and the whole thing being obviously a fraud, at the end of the first act they threatened to wreck the theater unless they got their money back, and so came away and spent their sixpences on real Kincora in Marlborough Street.

But the placard now in front of him was different. That said, "The Playboy of the Western World." He scratched his head to think. He seemed to remember hear tell that was an immoral play, a play insulting to religion and decency, that had been hissed off the stage years ago. He was almost sure some one had told him that (perhaps it was Emily Robinson, she knew everything, the Lord have mercy on her!) when Adam was just old enough to carry the jug to the public bar. Was it possible they had the impudence to put it on the stage again after Marlborough Street had declared against it? He knew he had heard of something grossly indecent in it, but he could not recall what it was, being a bit moidered by the drink and the contrariness of everything to-night . . . he was curious to know was this really the same play . . . he fumbled six coppers out of his pocket and went in.

Rotten hole the Abbey Theater, you couldn't swing a cat in it, and yet not half full. How did they make it pay? Was it subsidized from Dublin Castle to corrupt

the people? The audience dotted about were mostly young men, reading books or papers, without a spark of excitement in them. They didn't seem to care if the curtain never went up. Mr. Macfadden was the old enthusiastic style of playgoer: he stamped for thirteen minutes until the orchestra came in, and quieted him with familiar airs, he dozed a little until they ceased, and then stamped, like a giant refreshed, until the curtain at last rose. The play was not at all what he had been led to expect: two gentlemen and a lady in queer old clothes talked gibberish to each other as politely as if they lived in Rathmines. One of them was called Robert Emmet, but he was no more like the Robert Emmet that lived in Mr. Macfadden's spiritual world, than was the Brian Boru of "Kincora" like Mr. Macfadden's Brian Boru, that was done to death by Strongbow on Mud Island. The whole story might have been "Kincora" over again, only for trifling differences in the costumes and scenery, and the presence of a queer sort of piano-organ that played "Let Erin Remember," when there was no one near enough to lay hand or foot on it. Then Robert Emmet burst out crying because it wouldn't let him get a word in edgeways and the curtain came down.

"Is that tripe what you call 'The Playboy of the Western World'?" Mr. Macfadden shouted to the nearest group of young men.

They laughed shyly, and one of them, consulting his program, answered that it was called "An Imaginary Conversation."

"Conversationmixelbo," cried Mr. Macfadden. "I



paid my money to see 'The Playboy of the Western World,' and if they can't show me that I'll take it somewhere there's a bit of fun."

"If you wait long enough you'll see the 'Playboy' all right," they answered, and gradually sidled farther from him, not fancying his truculent tone. So he led off with his heels again and kept at it, orchestra or no orchestra, until he fell asleep and snored solidly through the first and second acts. But the clatter of the last act woke him and he gazed around resentfully.

"What the hell is all this hullabaloo?" he demanded in a voice that drowned the simulated bass of old Christy Mahon. But the actors inured to interruption took no notice nor halted in the wild business of the tragic farce. Mr. Macfadden was enthralled: half a dozen men were holding another down that had his teeth buried in yet another's calf, and a young girl was trying to get at one or other of them with a pair of red-hot tongs. Mr. Macfadden clapped his hands: he had never seen anything half so good on the stage before. A fellow in a night-shirt chasing a girl in pyjamas was poor fun compared with this. "There's a bit of humor for you," he called delightedly to his neighbors, who affected not to hear but huddled still farther away. Louder grew the riot on the stage, overwhelming at last even his approving voice, and he gazed spellbound, forgetful even of his injured honor. Then suddenly there was a hush: a half animal form crawled in from the back of the scene, reared up, and revealed a hairy monster of a man with a clotted bandage round his skull. Mr. Macfadden gathered that

he was the father of the young lad with the nippy teeth, the others were holding down and the girl going to burn with the tongs. Mr. Macfadden was annoyed with him as a kill-joy, and hissed and hooted, but still the actors went on acting imperturbably: no one there or in the audience took the smallest notice of him. It was maddening in itself for so big a man to be ignored. . . . But a moment later he could stand it no longer; for the young lad was no sooner released from his captors, at his father's instance, than he turned on the latter and drove him with violence off the stage.

This was the last straw. Mr. Macfadden leaped on to his seat and howled at the top of his voice, "I call the Almighty to witness that this play is a bloody scandal to good Catholics. . . . Playboymiyelbo! Playboymiyelbo!" But still the performance went on, until against his own roar he could hear the girl shrieking as though it were a personal matter between her and himself which should have the last word: "My grief I've surely lost him now, the only playboy of the Western World!" And the curtain fell amidst applause chiefly intended to smother Mr. Macfadden's language.

The audience drifted out. Mr. Macfadden, shearing half a dozen of the Intelligentsia of Dublin out of his way, swept into the vestibule. He found there a very little man struggling into his overcoat. Mr. Macfadden descended on him with clenched fists.

"I want to see the author of that scandalous play," he cried.

"The first or second?" asked the little man wearily.

"The man that wrote the 'Playboy.' That's the lad I want."

The little man looked at a cab which stood with open door awaiting him. "Is it urgent?" he asked.

"Urgent's the word," returned Mr. Macfadden. "I want to knock his head off."

"I see," said the little man, with the condescending humility of a shop walker. "There's no time to be lost."

"There is not," answered Mr. Macfadden in a tone which implied that the little man's head might be found to serve his immediate purpose. "Be quick and tell me now where I'll find him."

"Mount Jerome," answered the little man promptly. "Take the Harold's Cross tram from the Pillar." He stepped briskly past Mr. Macfadden into his cab, and as it was moving off opened the window to add, "You needn't be afraid of his hitting you back. But you'll want a pick-axe or you'll break your nails."

"Is it a corpse you want me to kill, you snot?"

Mr. Macfadden sprang forward to splinter the cab about its occupant's ears, but crashed in his blind rage into the lamp post to which he held, kicking it impotently. Then he dived thirstily across the road into a public-house and drank there until closing time. All caution had fallen from him when he came out. He was as bereft of reason as the bull goaded by spear and bandillero to charge the matador. Yet his soul was possessed

of a notion of outrageous joy: to avenge all his manifold wrongs at one fell swoop upon the naughty world. Earlier in the evening, when comparatively sober, he had thought mainly of the wrongs he had to avenge upon his wife; then in the theater he realized from the sight of the action upon the stage, the still greater enormity of Adam's offense; and now in the first stages of delirium tremens, a yet more provoking image rose before him: the handsome whiskered, sniggering Mr. Byron O'Toole, with his fantastic claim to be a gentleman of blood and his fatal fascination for the merry wives of Marlborough Street. He would pay for presuming to patronize Mr. Malachy Macfadden with his dirty custom. First of all Mr. Macfadden would deal with him. Then no one could say that he swung for a woman and child and let the man who was the cause of all go free.

It wanted half 'an hour of midnight as he hurried straight enough for all the drink he carried, swinging his heavy hands up Marlborough Street. There was little light in Mountjoy Court and the hall door was closed. He lit his pipe and waited, patiently smoking, until the stroke of midnight from St. George's bells when a woman opened it to come out. He gave her a confident "God save ye," as though an inmate, and passed through, closed the door behind him and found himself in pitch darkness. By the light blown from his pipe he climbed as softly as he could the great welled, dilapidated staircase, the timber squelching under his heavy weight. Towards the top floor where, despite the improvement in his position Mr. O'Toole still modestly

elected to live, the flooring was so rotten he had to strike a match to evade disaster. When reassured as to his surroundings he blew it out, waited to take his breath after the climb, and then tried the door: it was fastened, but he could see a dim light within. He tapped as gently as his iron fingers would allow. There was no answer. He tapped again, louder.

A woman's voice called faintly, as one who wishes no reply: "Who's there?"

He said nothing but tapped again, louder.

"What do you want?" asked the timid voice.

"Mr. Byron O'Toole is wanted," he answered, hoarse with the effort to muffle his tone and struggle against the vapors bursting through his brain.

The voice came more than ever hesitatingly, "Who wants him?"

Mr. Macfadden's voice took it upon itself to answer, "Emily Robinson," and Mr. Macfadden hearing, realized that he was mad drunk and could no longer disguise it. He heard a frantic whispering inside and knew for certain that his enemy was there cornered so that he could not escape; for Malachy was not the man to be stopped by a lodging house door. . . . He spat on his hands and took a fresh grip of the door handle. The whole floor of the house trembled with his nervous rage. The voice from within came in awestruck accents. "What are you saying about Emily Robinson? Sure isn't she dead and buried?"

"Never mind if she is that," answered Mr. Macfadden, laughing at his own humor. "She sent me for O'Toole."

There was a scream in the question, "Who are you at all?"

Then he thundered through the door, "Tell O'Toole I'm Macfadden come to call him to my wife and Emily Robinson and Fan Tweedy, and all his other mops in hell."

There was a scuttling inside and the sound of a window thrown open, while Macfadden's pressure threatened to start the panels of the door. The woman's voice broke forth in a despairing wail. "Sure Mr. O'Toole has never been in here this night. . . . For Christ's sake go away now."

"Christmíyelbo!" answered Mr. Macfadden, as a final challenge to his enemies, and, stepping back to throw his full weight against the door, dropped his heel in the crumbling wood, waved his mighty arms vainly to recover his balance, toppled through the broken balustrade, and fell, bounding and rebounding from side to side of the handsomely welled staircase, until he reached the hall four floors below. His ghost may rise to haunt our pages still but his body rested there.

So perished Malachy Macfadden, a victim to his environment and the system of government that created it. We do not state his case as one of Ireland's wrongs: thousands of Macfaddens under other names smell no sweeter in London, Liverpool, Newcastle, Glasgow, or where you please, from Plymouth to Aberdeen. And our Mr. Macfadden had a privilege not shared by all; for the next day Father Innocent knelt by his bier and

prayed piteously to God for the soul of his poor brother. It is easy to believe that so long as there be Innocents to pray for them, the Macfaddens need not fear eternal damnation, but who is so good a Catholic as to desire the pleasure of their company in heaven?

## CHAPTER XV

### MR. MACFADDEN'S LAST PROGRESS AND EPITAPH

MRS. MACFADDEN'S mind had the limitations of a lusty body, bred in darkness by bodies that for generations had forgotten the light. One must not say she could not live out of this darkness, but it is doubtful if she would have been any the happier for it. Yet even her blackness had been more atramentous for the companionship of Malachy Macfadden: the dark of her mind was not so pitchy that she was unconscious of the shadow he had thrown upon it. Whatever tenderness lingered in her once sordidly passionate and now soured and twisted nature was roused to show itself that night Adam saved her life: as well she knew, from the brutish sot she had so rashly married longer ago than she clearly recalled. Even in her abasement of terror, she felt a pride in seeing the cub, begotten of her body in the one moment of joy that haunted her memory, spring into reality as something transcending her foul experience of life. She had brought forth a David to save her from her Goliath. These names did not occur to her, but the mental picture was there somewhere in her dazed brain.

Through the night mother and son sat side by side on the bed, waiting for the worst. The door locked and



barricaded to stay the intruder while they parleyed, the window open to scream for help if he would not listen. In her heart, she knew her husband would listen to her no more! that he was thirsting now for blood in preference to alcohol and Adam betrayed his topmost thought by keeping the fire redly burning with the poker in it. He had never known such masterful rage before, and his mother's tacit gratitude for his prowess gave it an edge of self-confidence. Never again would his father lay hands on him or on his mother before his eyes.

With morning came brusquely a policeman with the news that a body alleged to be that of one Malachy Macfadden of Count Alley, had been found with the neck broken at the bottom of a staircase in the premises known as 3 Mountjoy Court, and was now lying at the City Mortuary, where an inquest would be held in due course. The widow of the deceased would be required formally to identify his remains and to answer any questions the coroner or jurymen might see fit to put to her.

Mrs. Macfadden's apron flew to her eyes. "Oh, the poor dear to think of it!" she cried. "And me expecting him home every minute all the night!" She broke off to tell the policeman triumphantly "I haven't had a wink of sleep." But he was unimpressed and answered roughly that anyhow he was not there to listen to her gab but to order her what she was to do and failing to do would find it so much the worse for her. And with that he took his leave.

Adam and his mother had breakfast silently. He wondered of what she might be thinking as she sat

opposite to him, he in the dead man's place, munching her bread and butter moistened with tea, leisurely as a cow in a meadow. At last she said, as though abandoning a problem of some difficulty: "I don't know who to ask to the wake, only Mr. O'Toole."

Adam stared at her, his cup half way to his lips. "Will they let him come?"

She laughed in her apron to find that he supposed his godfather to be under lock and key for slaying her husband. "Catch O'Toole standing up against a man like Macfadden! Sure he'd run from a hen he saw he wasn't afraid of him, for all his high ways. It's little you take after him."

Adam was more than a trifle mystified by the close as well as the opening of this statement; but, although he saw he need no longer be afraid of his mother, shyness forbade him to question her. Presently Father Innocent called. The widow received him becomingly, and while he was there, Adam thought she really seemed cloudily sorry for her loss. She became, as it were, an abstract widow mourning her dead. She used few canting words, but real tears channeled her grimy cheeks. Perhaps she had known a Macfadden unknown to him, a Macfadden that for a day, a week, or more, had been clean and kind and honest in her eyes; perhaps the little priest created such an image from his own fancy and gave it a momentary reality in hers. But Adam had no feeling for the dead man even with all Father Innocent's advocacy, but a childish hatred and contempt. He was glad that Father Innocent told him that he need not go

with his mother to the inquest: he wished never to see that brutal form again.

The coroner found nothing over which to waste his time and the jury's in the case of Malachy Macfadden. The medical evidence showed that he died of a fracture of the cervical vertebræ, which, as well as his minor injuries, might well have been occasioned by an accidental fall from a height. There was no mark of violence. The police provided evidence that he had been found drunk and disorderly outside his residence early in the evening, but had evaded arrest by taking flight into Count Street. There was reason to believe that he had subsequently visited sundry public-houses and sought admission to more than one place of entertainment, and created a disturbance at the Abbey Theater, also that the staircase at the premises, 3 Mountjoy Court, was not in serviceable repair. Finally Mr. O'Toole, presenting a distinguished figure in his new overcoat, bore witness that he had heard the deceased voice's demanding admission to the apartments temporarily occupied by him on the top floor of 3 Mountjoy Court, about midnight, and, fearing to disturb the neighboring ladies and gentlemen, called to him, without opening the door, to go home, as he was in bed and asleep. That he heard the deceased, as he supposed descending the stairs, and knew no more about the matter until informed in the morning of his melancholy fate which shocked him very much as he had regarded the deceased almost in the light of a prodigy. Questioned by a juryman, he did not mean prodigal, but would say protégé, if the coroner

preferred that word. He and the deceased were on the best of terms. He had recently given the deceased an important order for which he had paid spot cash. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour for a business call, it was not impossible that the deceased had come to solicit further commands. He was the sort of man to act on impulse in matters of business, particularly with customers who would consider the payment of spot cash. He believed the deceased and his wife to be on the best of terms and that she was of great help to him in his business. So far as he knew, deceased had not an enemy in the world. He was not prepared to deny that he was an uncertain tempered man when drunk and might have been difficult to get rid of had he admitted him. Still, he regretted, now that it was too late, that he had not taken this risk. Blood was thicker than water. He did not mean to convey that the deceased was a relation of his. He would be sorry to think so. This concluded his evidence, which made a good impression on those members of the jury who knew nothing of him.

In fine, the coroner told the jury that as long as the Abbey Theater was allowed to exercise its pernicious influence, he supposed such things would happen in Dublin. In Philadelphia and all enlightened American cities you would be sent to jail for attempting to perform such a piece as that the deceased was said by the police (and he saw no reason to doubt their evidence) to have been present at immediately before the fatal act which prematurely ended his no doubt valuable life. But he would take a charitable view and direct them to return a

verdict of death by misadventure. This they cheerfully did, and the body was handed over to the widow. Adam read the report in the *Herald*, snappily set forth under the rubric, "City Coroner sits on Synge."

Adam's first use of his new freedom was his refusal to attend the wake. When he saw his father in his coffin he found it agreeable to reflect that he could never get out of it, but would be put away at remote Glasnevin until doomsday. To please Father Innocent, he knelt beside him and joined his voice listlessly in the prayers for the dead. No soul was ever damned with fainter praise. As soon as Father Innocent had departed, warning the widow against any paganism in the funeral rites, Adam, despite his mother's half-hearted remonstrance, went off to sell his papers as usual.

When he returned, late as he could be, the festivities were over, the guests departing. It had been a tame evening, tamer, said Count Alley, than the corpse would have liked. But what could he do, poor devil, Lord have mercy on him, lying there in his coffin, with that O'Toole giving himself airs like the Lord Lieutenant, and carrying on as if the place and everything in it, including the corpse itself, belonged to him. They consoled themselves by saying as they came away, just loud enough and no more for their hosts to hear, "Murder will out," being all fully convinced that Mr. Byron O'Toole had for some motive which only God knew and might never explain, lured Mr. Malachy Macfadden to the top of the Mountjoy Court staircase and then pushed him through the railings. In the other scale,

they could not unreservedly censure the widow for preferring O'Toole to the deceased, for there was no getting away from it that O'Toole, when he liked, was a perfect gentleman, particularly with ladies, whereas the deceased, Lord have mercy on him, had never been better than a public nuisance. Although they hoped Mr. Byron O'Toole would be hanged for it, they congratulated each other that Mr. Malachy Macfadden was dead.

Adam went to the funeral, looking forward to the enjoyment of it as his first pageant. . . . He, his mother, Mr. O'Toole, and Father Innocent filled a mourning coach, following a hearse second only in dignity to the one which Mr. O'Toole, who had made the arrangements, would have chosen for himself. Behind them streeled sundry outside cars laden with neighbors who went to all funerals, and would, in fact, go anywhere rather than remain in Count Street. One of these failed to round Dunphy's Corner, but rejoined the procession on the return trip.

The most noticeable thing in Adam's eyes was the melancholy splendor of his godfather. Usually he remembered him at home as raffish and unkempt; not so unkempt as Macfadden but almost equally disreputable. Adam was too young to understand the vagaries of a man of temperament, nor could he know that the Byron O'Toole who condescended to visit or even lodge in Count Alley was not the Byron O'Toole of the great world beyond. To-day he was clad in almost irreproachably clean linen, shiny, well-watered tall hat,

black frock-coat, black trousers, black patent leather boots (enclosing possibly no less black but neat feet), and black kid gloves with but moderate bursts in the thumbs. The only article of clothing which Adam recognized was a black bow tie. He had always worn this, even when without a collar. His bearing, too, matched his clothes: he treated Mrs. Macfadden, Father Innocent, and even Adam with Grandisonian courtesy; and the undertaker's foreman could not look towards him without raising his hat. He believed the gentleman had come to bury the husband of an old family servant. He venerated his noble character and dreamed of largess. It was an idle dream.

Through O'Connell Street, like a trickle of ink through a desert, the late Mr. Malachy Macfadden, tailor of Dublin, passed on his last progress; up the hill by the Rotunda, out of Rutland Square, through North Frederick Street and Blessington Street, and round to the right into Berkeley Road, past the corner of Eccles Street, and so on, the way the reader knows. As it being now high noon, the shadow of the Mater Misericordiæ Hospital blackened the way, Adam fell a-crying, and the priest leaned forward to pat his knee thinking these were generous tears; but the boy was only saying to himself that had things turned out less fortunately it might have been his own little body jogging on to Glasnevin.

No, he had no feeling, absolutely none, for the monster safely boxed at last, that was bumping over the tram-lines in front of them, across the canal bridge to Glasnevin. . . . To Glasnevin where Emily Robinson was. . . and who else that he had known and cared

for? . . . Caroline Brady . . . was she there or was she not? . . . Had he ceased to care? . . . What did it matter whether he cared or not? . . . Nothing mattered but food and drink and sleep. The sleep that was not death.

He felt sick and sorry for all dead people as he entered the cemetery gates and he walked behind the coffin to the chapel and the graveside. But he was only sick at the crowded evidence of the abomination called death, and sorry chiefly for himself, who too must die and be laid in earth like this. As the coffin was lowered away from his sight and the first clod of covering clay thudded after it, he made a last effort to pray in his heart for the thing that had called itself his father. But he could not think of it as such and the prayer would not come. He found himself pricking his ears to hear Mr. O'Toole whisper to his mother as he turned his back complacently on the grave, "We're well quit of that fellow."

Adam's heart, thanks to Father Innocent's entreaty, was free now from all vengeful longing against the dead man's peace; but he had seen no injustice in graving these words on his headstone.



## CHAPTER XVI

### PLEASANT STREET

THE death of Mr. Macfadden led to material as well as moral changes in Adam's life: perhaps the most notable to a child was the evacuation of the hated room in which his childhood had, with the only alternative of the street, been passed. To be out of that he was willing to submit even to the patronage of the misliked Mr. Byron O'Toole. The latter became the tutelary genius of the family: to him they were beholden for the means to move to vastly superior quarters; and, much as he despised his character, Adam found his relations with him far less disagreeable than with the dead man. He had a vile tongue, but Adam seldom had it turned upon himself; for commonly there was some reason for what he said and did, and unlike Macfadden, O'Toole, unless suffering from biliousness, would listen to reason. Besides, they came little in contact. In the new lodgings Adam was given a room to himself: the tiniest room he ever saw. Father Innocent's was palatial in comparison; and its shape being under the roof, was that of an ill-planned dog-kennel; but it held a real if lop-sided bed in it, and it was his very own. None else ever went near it; for it was accessible only by a ladder, and Mrs. Macfadden's policy towards her son was now one of *laissez faire*.

What part of the house she lived in he was not told but he knew that the kitchen lay in her domain and that he was welcome to wash himself in the scullery every morning, and to eat his breakfast, and a better dinner than he had ever had at Count Alley, with her at the kitchen table. His other meals she left him to provide for himself outside, but, on the other hand, she never asked him to account for his earnings, nor did Mr. O'Toole call upon him for monetary support. So, in the dark and spidery recess under the roof, he commenced to lay up a little hoard. He reckoned out, with the famous pencil bought at Gerrard's and well preserved as were all his few belongings, that by the time he was eleven he might, with the aid of the Blessed Virgin, possess a whole golden sovereign of his own. He missed the sales of many papers, dreaming of how he would spend it when he had it.

The only restrictions laid down by his mother were that he should enter and leave the house precisely at hours upon which they had agreed, never to knock at the hall door, but to whistle at the area-railings until she came to him, and on no account or pretense whatever, to linger on the stairs, but pass swiftly and silently as possible from the hall to his room, not visiting even the kitchen but at the appointed hours.

Adam understood that these were the terms on which he enjoyed his delicious freedom, and he kept them loyally; for it was natural that the other denizens of that seemly house should object to a young lad trampling up and down stairs all day, and hammering away at the

knocker. He hardly ever heard any noise from his eyrie, if he woke in the night, except perhaps queer English accents talking with mincing unintelligibility on the stairs. Often there was a piano going gaily on the first floor as he stole up to bed, and more than once he heard a piercing voice in that room call entreatingly, "Play 'Love's Drame,' Mr. Moore; play 'Love's Drame'!" He imagined that it was the voice of a lady who, when he had opened the hall door one day for her, kissed him and called him "a perfect little gentleman love," an episode the flavor of which he enjoyed until he remembered that the last person who had kissed him was Caroline Brady, and she would never kiss him any more. What was the use of accumulating wealth when you had to die in the end? And what a terrible thing was kissing when you kept that end in view! He wished he could be a saint, like Father Innocent, or else that after all he had died in the hospital, before he knew how delicious life could be, even so near the Pro-Cathedral as Pleasant Street, and how desolate was Glasnevin, to say nothing of hell!

On Sundays Adam saw more of his mother than on other days, for they went to half-past eleven mass together, as they had done in his father's lifetime; only then he was often sent on in front to the Pro-Cathedral, or left behind in it, whereas now she never failed to go out and return with him, carrying a large Missal, to that mighty agreeable house, No. 7 Pleasant Street. He had a pride in standing by her on the steps, holding the great Missal for her, while she fumbled her placket looking for the

latchkey which presently came out in her gloved hand to open the door just as if the house really belonged to her. Now that Macfadden was dead, she dressed herself so decently, especially on Sundays, that he thought she really might pass for the landlady instead of being merely the housekeeper. He wished Father Innocent would come and see them there, it was such a change from Count Alley, and he dreamed of persuading the little priest to climb the ladder to his own retreat, which he promised himself the glory of exhibiting by the light of a bull's eye lantern bought at Lawrence's, for the further pursuit of literature.

Not that he possessed a library, but he read every week *The Irish Homestead*, which he bought at first for its agreeable name, and thinking that it treated of life in typical Irish residences such as 7 Pleasant Street. Then he took an interest in it because it told him unheard of ways of churning butter, milking cows, and feeding pigs; and he remembered sister at the hospital telling him how, if geese were made to co-operate, they would in time lay golden eggs. He wondered if his mother would allow him to keep a couple of geese up in his room, his very own room, and bring them down every morning, before any one was about, to the scullery to have a swim like their kind in Stephen's Green. Some of the people who wrote to the *Homestead* seemed to maintain that if you kept a goose quite quiet, so that it concentrated its mind, it laid better eggs. His room was just the place for an experiment of that sort, so he summoned up courage and sent a postal order to a

lady in Cork who advertised geese for sale. He thought one would be enough to start co-operating with, and that if he took his mother by surprise, presenting her with a real egg, even though not of gold, she would not make a fuss; it being understood that none but himself need ever see or hear of the goose, once he had got it safely up the ladder. But it was he who was surprised when it arrived in a brown paper parcel, and showing no sign of interest in co-operation. . . . Tears stood in his eye, for here was the greater part of his small capital in danger, if not lost.

Luckily the postman delivered the ill-starred bird into his own hands, and he was able to convey it to his mountain fastness without notice. At first he was unwilling to believe it irrevocably dead, and placed it between the blankets of his still warm bed in the hope of reviving it. He left it there while he went out and studied the appearance of other geese in the neighboring poulterers'. His deductions were fatal to his hopes. When he returned he found a cat mewling on the top rung of his ladder, unable to proceed farther because he had fastened the door, or to descend because of an attack of nerves.

He lifted her down, and whispered to her to go away, but she only purred and rubbed herself against his legs, confident that he would not refuse her his hospitality. Seeing that he must either entertain her with a good grace or submit to be blackmailed, he invited her up the ladder, and there in the darkness, feebly illuminated by the bull's eye lantern, and snowed under by the feathers

which Adam plucked unhandily from the corpse, he and the cat started to share the goose. For three days this banquet went on intermittently. Then the cat lost interest and came no more, disappearing as mysteriously as it had come upon the scene. About a week later, hearing the lady on the first floor question his mother about the drains, he packed the remains and a fair share of the plumage of the goose back in the brown paper and threw the parcel over Butt Bridge into the water by the Bristol boat, where not many months before he had thought to throw himself. Thus went seven and sixpence: seven and eightpence halfpenny, counting the postal order and the stamp and notepaper. And he felt none the better for it; for even a healthy, hungry lad cannot stuff himself with raw gooseflesh for ten days on end, and escape all reproof from Dame Nature.

For a little while he was as bilious as Mr. O'Toole commonly looked, and he developed a scrupulosity of conscience that was new to him. He confessed the adventure of the goose to Father Innocent, under the headings of both gluttony and deceit. He asked if he were bound to tell his mother about it. The priest told him that it was a difficult point, but he took upon himself the responsibility of saying that, as there was no lie to be retracted, small good could be gained by saying anything more about it. He proceeded forthwith to have Adam confirmed, and the Lord Bishop of Canea expressed himself as so struck by the young catechumen's intelligence that the little priest announced that he would now prepare him for his first Holy Communion.

Although these were familiar words in Adam's ears they rang with a new vibrancy when applied to the great act looming up in his own immediate future. So far, despite his glib verbal acquaintance with elementary theology, his real religion had been crude Mariolatry, and he was interested in the Second Person of the Trinity only as being Mary's son. Now he commenced to think of Jesus not only as true God but as true Man: that is to say, He had in Him something in common even with the late Malachy Macfadden. As a result, one Sunday morning after mass, having left his mother dutifully at her door, he announced his desire to be excused from dinner (to which as Mr. O'Toole had important business to discuss with her, she the more readily consented), and forthwith turned back towards Nelson's Pillar and took the tram for Glasnevin. There he knelt him down in the wet grass about the place where he supposed his father's bones to rest, and long and earnestly prayed for him, not even now as his father, but as one who had a common father with him and the Son of Mary. He felt as surely as he felt the cold on his knees that, despite the hatred which, by the devil's artifice, had severed them, he and the dead man were members of one another; and he strove to wish him quick and well again that he might seek out a way of reconciliation. He asked also the soul of Emily Robinson, surely by this time safe in heaven, to think of some good to say for Macfadden. And he ended by saying in a waking dream, "Caroline Brady, if you're dead, will you too pray for him?" It did not occur to him

that the living Caroline Brady's prayers could have any value.

With an exaltation that turned the tram into a fiery chariot he returned home, to encounter Father Innocent at the place where Pleasant Street runs into Marlborough Street. "What makes you so happy?" the priest asked, scanning him closely. "Has any one been telling you anything? Where have you had your dinner?"

Adam made no secret of his doings at the hour when the rest of the world was filling its stomach. He was glad that the priest should understand that he found happiness in other things beside geese. "That's a dotey boy," said the priest enthusiastically, stroking the back of his neck. "How I wish God would spare me to see you a priest, the sort of priest I'd have been myself if God had given me your head and heart."

"D'ye think I could ever be a priest?" Adam blurted awestricken at his own potential piety.

"I think you could," answered Father Innocent, "and what's more, I think you will. D'ye remember the first day you ever came to me for instruction, I told you the day you made your first Holy Communion would be the happiest of your life: the very happiest day of all the long days that might lie before you?"

"Indeed I do, father," said Adam. "I remember it well."

"Well," declared the priest, beaming with his own happiness, "this day week, please God, you will make your own, and mark my words you will find it all come true that I said to you." He seemed bubbling over with



the desire to enlarge upon the happiness of the first communion day, but broke off, "Go home now to your mother, my dotey boy, and tell her with my compliments, she must give you a good meal and that before she attends to anything else in the house or out of it." He shook his hand warmly and hurried off on the little tired feet that grew ever more difficult to urge to their journey's end. In the kitchen Mr. O'Toole, as well as his mother, received him with marked cordiality. "I can see that lad of yours has been up to no good," said his godfather archly, "and now he comes back like the prodigal son, to eat your fatted calves."

Adam looked straight at his godfather, noticing with unaccountable satisfaction that the man really did have a very gentlemanly appearance now that he always wore a collar and pretty good clothes. "Father Innocent said I was to ask mother for a good meal with his compliments."

"Oh, he said that, did he?" returned Mr. O'Toole affably, and exchanged glances with the widow, as Adam had often seen them do in Macfadden's lifetime, but they were openly merry now. Nevertheless the widow hastened at once to honor the priest's demand. Tea, bread and butter and hard-boiled eggs were put before Adam on a clean napkin, with surprising celerity.

Mr. O'Toole produced a cigar from the inside of his pocket handkerchief, bit off the end with aristocratic languor, and lit it with a wax vesta. "Did Father Feeley say anything about anything else to you?" he

asked, with the air of a man who would have you think he is just making conversation.

Adam blushed and answered with his mouth full of hot egg, "He said he was sure I'd make a good priest."

Mr. Byron O'Toole glanced again at the widow and puffed out an impressive column of smoke, which he watched as though expecting a genie to emerge from it. "That's all cod," said he.

Adam was justifiably offended, but he held his tongue. His godfather was not the sort of man to understand the emotions he had felt to-day. Apart from that he was keener now on his tea and eggs than anything else. And at no time was the atmosphere at Pleasant Street, though so near the Pro-Cathedral, conducive to a spiritual train of thought. It was a grand thing to be a priest surely, but it was also very agreeable to live in Pleasant Street.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE HAPPIEST DAY

IF happiness be a state of joyful expectation, the day of Adam's first communion was, as yet, the happiest of his life. It opened and closed in exultation that carried him far from the trodden ground round Pleasant Street, to which his physical being was on that day, as most others, confined. He went no farther than Gardiner's Street, whither Father Innocent brought him in the afternoon that followed the morning's dream interview with a God as childish as himself. As the dream faded a little towards the commoner thoughts of life, he found himself expecting to be taken, in fulfilment of the ancient promise, to the Zoo. Yet he did not allow himself to be depressed by the change of plan; for he saw by the priest's face (to say nothing of hints falling from him in the course of several days' spiritual instruction), that truly remarkable things were about to happen. He had felt so uncommonly good all the morning, and looked so holy in the glimpses he caught of himself in the many mirrors at Pleasant Street, he wondered if his sanctity were sufficiently established in Father Innocent's eyes that he had made interest with Father Muldoon to enable him to assist at the performance of a miracle. He recalled that some beatific gentleman in whom sister

had striven to interest him was allowed to see a miracle on his first communion day. Turning into Mountjoy Square, the priest was edified by his rapt gaze, not knowing that he was weighing the joy of seeing a miracle against that of seeing a rhinoceros.

Arrived face to face with the Presbytery bell, Father Innocent cast a hasty glance over his young charge, noticed regretfully that he looked again like other boys, and exhorted him to blow his nose and answer as briefly as respect allowed the questions that might be put to him inside. Then he rang, and forthwith they were admitted to the apartment Adam already knew to be the antechamber to Jehovah's throne-room. There sat the demi-god, Father Muldoon, and another somewhat younger priest, whose face was familiar to him, though he did not know his name.

This priest held in his left hand a letter, the envelope of which appeared to be in the possession of Father Muldoon. Adam noticed that it had a queer stamp, and wondered if it came from that part of Father Muldoon's dominions where the people walked upon their heads. Perhaps he was about to be shown one or more of these people now, that would be in a sense a miracle . . . but in the Zoo he might have seen far greater oddities. He found the strange priest studying him while some formula of introduction was gone through. He was at once attracted and perturbed by him, his features weary as Father Innocent's but more clearly cut and intellectual, brownish black, peering eyes,

a markedly oval face, and a smile flickering between kindness and ingenuous, priestly guile. He spoke little and rather too quickly, for Adam's ear, from a novel vocabulary. His name was Tuite.

It was the positive Father Muldoon who did the talking:—

“Adam Macfadden,” said he, with a fluency of an advocate who has read his brief. “It is a particular pleasure to me to see you here again in this room and to learn from your good friend, Father Feeley, that my little effort to help you has not been thrown away. But, of course, that pleasure is multiplied a thousand-fold when I think of you as having made to-day your first Holy Communion. On such a day we know from the universal experience of all who have ever held the Catholic faith that we realize in its full immensity for the first time the ineffable goodness of God Almighty. That is to say, we know as much about it as we are ever likely to know in this vale of tears and that is, of course, very little.”

Here he paused more from force of habit than for any other reason.

“This happiness I speak of is, of course, as Father Feeley I am sure has explained to you, a purely spiritual happiness and much as I can see that you feel it, you would, as a good Catholic, feel it not a whit the less if you were starving, or had toothache, or were wasting away from some terrible disease, such as”—he paused to find a word with the right cadence, and chose—“influenza.” Father Tuite's eyebrows heaved, but Father

Innocent sighed, "My poor father died of something like it."

Father Muldoon pursued. "This happiness, which is the reflection in our souls of God's goodness, is independent of all the things of this world, and is the premonition and promise of that happiness which, if we persevere in our faith, through sunshine and storm, we may hope one day to feel in the actual presence of God Himself. And, I need not add, for ever and ever afterwards."

He paused forensically as before.

"But besides this great happiness which is of heaven and not of earth, there is a minor happiness which, though it be of the earth, can only be enjoyed with any profit and any propriety by those whose thoughts are fixed on heaven. And, by a fortunate coincidence, I am in a position to tell you on this day, so happy in its heavenly sense, that you also have much reason to feel happy, to rejoice even in a purely temporal and worldly sense." Here he made a very long and effective pause, it seemed to Adam half an hour, and was perhaps, nearly a minute. "I must not tell you too much, but I may tell you this. A certain sum of money has been remitted to . . . to"—he exchanged glances with Father Innocent—"to us, from a kind friend in a remote part of the world, with instructions that it should be spent on your education and general upbringing. This would involve my acting in future, at all events for the present, in *loco parentis*, that is to say, as if I were your father. And I have obtained through Father Feeley's good

offices, your mother's consent to this." He here paused and looked inquiringly at Father Tuite, who smiled and nodded. He then glanced at Father Feeley, and went on, "For the present Father Feeley has kindly consented to act for me in the matter of your general bringing up and guardianship, but, with regard to your education, he agrees with me that we cannot do better, in your own interests, than to hand you over to Father Tuite here, who, as you must certainly be aware, is rector of the famous college of Belvedere, where the great man whose papers you earn your bread by selling, was educated, as well as ever so many other celebrated people whose careers you will do well to study in the college magazine." Here his tone became godlike. "I was there myself more than forty years ago, so perhaps you will be here, where I am now, forty years hence."

"Amen," said Father Innocent absentmindedly. All the three priests exchanged glances and smiled. Father Innocent was much affected. The Jesuits swapped anecdotes about Father Tom and Father Edward Kelly. Adam pinched himself and tried to make up his mind whether he was living now or forty years hence or when. The salient point was that he was a millionaire, or at least a gentleman of means. His hand felt for Father Innocent's. He had no idea that his first communion-day was going to be as happy as this. Momentarily he preferred Father Muldoon to a rhinoceros, and yet he felt that he was not quite as happy as he ought to have been. It seemed that he would have to give up his Arcadian

Alsatia in Pleasant Street. He heard Father Tuite addressing him.

"All that being said so clearly by Father Provincial, you understand, Adam, don't you," said Father Tuite, speaking perhaps quicker than it is wise to speak to children. "You understand that you will be moving in quite a different sphere from that to which you have been accustomed. In the school over which I have the honor to rule, you will be associated with boys who are not inferior, socially, perhaps, to any in Dublin. It has been your misfortune, speaking in, I fear, a worldly sense, to have been brought up so far, amidst rude and rough and uncleanly surroundings. All that must now be put right away for ever, or for so long as I am to be held responsible for your education. I know already from what Father Feeley has told me that you will be a credit to Belvedere on the religious, on the moral side, but it is my duty to see that you are also a credit to the school on the worldly side. You must, in short, learn to behave like a gentleman. . . ." He hesitated and blushed as though he had caught himself uttering an absurdity. "You will not misunderstand what I mean by a gentleman?"

"No, sir," said Adam promptly. "Father Innocent Feeley is a gentleman."

The little priest turned scarlet and Adam was startled to hear him groan. "However could you say that? you've disgraced us both now surely."

Father Muldoon, too, sniffed discouragingly, but Father Tuite answered, with a smile that was blithe,



"Precisely, Adam. I am glad to see that you understand so perfectly what I mean."

And so the interview ended, and Adam walked back to Pleasant Street on air, praising the Trinity and Mary ever Virgin and Holy Joseph and Michael the Archangel, and above all, Father Innocent Feeley, who represented them on earth, for what was certainly the happiest day in his life, surpassing even that on which he kissed Caroline Brady in Dalkey Tunnel, for to-night he could lay him cozily down with the confidence that the angels were on his side.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED

THE days that followed the happiest of Adam's life were not altogether what he expected; they had their merits, but they were disappointing; for, even as Mr. O'Toole with Fan Tweedy, he had expected too much. It seemed to him that no earthly happiness really surpassed that of dwelling amidst the rafters of 7 Pleasant Street and being beyond any other boy he knew his own master. To be a man of property he found had duties which went far to outweigh its advantages. It is true it brought a certain accession of bodily comfort. He was demonstrably better lodged and better nourished, but he had been content with his lodging and food at Pleasant Street, and the material gain did not compensate for the spiritual loss. The pleasure he derived from his removal to the second floor of 3 St. George's Place, adjoining the church of that name, was pure snobbery; he was only reconciled to the change by the thought that he was now a gentleman and must be prepared to accept the limitations of that state of life.

The worst defect of his new condition was the virtual disappearance of his freedom. He was put in the charge of the lady who owned the house: she called it an apartment house for gentlemen, and with her close cropped

hair, simplicity of costume, severity of feature, harshness of voice, and altitude of outlook, she was to all intents and purposes a gentleman herself. Her name was Elizabeth Gannon. She was assisted in the work of the house by the ugliest and cleanest servant maid Adam had ever seen; he thought it a pity she should call attention to her plainness by putting so bright a polish on it: her face reminded him of the beeswaxed floor in the refectory at Bray—you felt it was asking to be walked on. Miss Gannon, as owner of house and maid, evidently shared this impression. The maid's name was Attracta. Adam supposed that she was so called because she worked like a traction engine, harder even than Miss Gannon but not such long hours; for the latter appeared never to rest. She came in at three o'clock one morning by St. George's Bells to blow out his candle by which he was reading in bed. But that staunch old friend the bull's eye lantern baffled her researches. It did not escape her eyes that he possessed such a foolish toy, but far was it from entering her male and rigid imagination that he lit it in the small hours to study the poetry of Mr. Keats.

Mr. Keats, as Adam had learned at Belvedere, was the greatest living Irish poet. He was not so good as Davis, nor of course the immortal Moore, but he was as good as any one now alive. Adam had at first understood that his name was Yeats, but the bookseller to whom he applied, a gentleman with authoritative red whiskers, smiled in fatherly reproachfulness, "There is no such author, unless you want Yeats's *History of*

*Commerce*, price five shillings, the only poet with a name like that is Keats. I can do you his complete works for a shilling or choice selection eight pence." Adam had no hesitation in taking the larger quantity at the smaller price. It was a stunted, blue volume, with a pleasantly decorated back and three hundred and sixty pages which he read conscientiously from the first until the last. But he had left Belvedere before reaching this Ultimate Thule.

It must not be supposed that the perusal of Keats or Yeats was the first step to Parnassus at the Jesuit college. Even such excursions into hagiology as the *Eve of St. Agnes* were not made at the Preparatory School, in the lowest class of which Adam made his academical début. He was nearly ten years old, but Father Tuite very sensibly made him begin at the beginning. At the end of his first term he romped home first in the class in every subject; and the master reported that it was fair neither to himself nor the others to keep him there. So after Christmas he was promoted to the second class, which was presided over by Mr. Flood, S.J. It was he who hinted at the existence of poets other than the authors of *The Fall of D'Assas* and *The Loss of the Royal George*, and he had in fact mentioned both Keats and Yeats, and left the same sort of impression on the brains of his audience as if he had said Box and Cox.

Mr. Flood himself merely intended to air his knowledge, and never dreamed that his pupils would pay the smallest attention to what he said, unless given out line by line as something to be learned by heart under

threat of the ferrule, and not a great deal then. But Mr. Flood was truly interested in poetry though he valued it chiefly for its rhetorical quality. A big man with a sonorous voice, he was a born elocutionist and longed for the sacred hour when he might hear himself thunder from the pulpit. Meanwhile on those days when the world went well with him, he treated his class to such brief, happily applied excerpts from Shakespeare, as "Friends, Romans, Countrymen! lend me your ears." "Tell me, Terence O'Brien, how would you say 'O Table' in Latin! or 'I'll put a girdle round the world in forty minutes.' Take your slate, Sullivan, and tell me how many miles a minute that would be if the circumference of the globe were forty miles, remembering, of course, that it's a lot more than that," or "Not all the perfumes of Arabia, Patsy Scully, will take the ink off your hands if you hold your pen like that."

There were days when Mr. Flood roared and thumped and threatened the innocent and guilty alike with his ferrule; but even his rages were a form of rhetoric, and Adam saw there was no harm in him. Boys who were willing to learn he did his best to teach, and Adam who, when not listening to what he said, could show that he was thinking over something that had previously been uttered was his favorite pupil. At the summer vacation he carried round to St. George's Place the nucleus of a small library: the English prize which was *Robinson Crusoe* in French, the French prize, which was *Michel Strogoff* in English, and the prize for Christian doctrine, which was *Aviation for Young Catholics*, in

Messrs. Billing and Cohen's admirable Science Without Tears Series. The information contained in this did not carry one far in the empyrean but it sufficed to convince Adam that for all ordinary purposes of locomotion it was, if only for reasons of economy, better for the present to take the tram. No doubt the day would come when he might stable his aeroplane at the rear of St. George's Place and fly down occasionally to Bray to hear the band play on the esplanade. He had never seen a flying machine, and it figured in his mind as an ingenious toy, not a solid triumph of the engineer such as the Bristol steamer or the Waterford Restaurant Train. *Robinson Crusoe* in French resisted his efforts to read it, for the Abbé Pincenez who had adapted it for the use of his pupils some eighty years since, represented the good Robinson as consoling his exile not with the Bible, but Bossuet's *Oraisons Funebres*. *Michel Strogoff* in English was a little better, but gave Adam a gloomy impression of the Russian character, nor could he understand the hero being on such good terms with the police. His three prizes appeared to him as prizes to be desirable, but as books to be poor things—the only one he took at all seriously was the first. When Mr. Flood congratulated him on the prospect of so much to occupy his mind during the summer holidays, Adam mentioned that he was reading Keats.

The young but large Jesuit stared at him. "Whatever put such an idea into your head?"

"Didn't you tell us, sir," Adam protested, "that he was a great Irish poet?"

"Keats an Irish poet, is it?" roared Mr. Flood derisively, "he was an English cockney born and bred. I don't suppose he knew whether Ireland was north, south, east, or west. The Irish poet I mentioned of that name, I mean of the name you thought was that, was Mr. W. B. Yeats. He's a very nice writer indeed, author of a beautiful poem called "Innisfree," though rather tame as recitation. But at your age you're much too young to read either Yeats or Keats except in selected passages. Not that it really matters so long as you're too young to understand. Browning is a much better poet for boys, 'How we brought the Good News,' and 'A Legend of Ratisbon.' You can't do better than Browning and Eliza Cooke. But she's comic, remember that. You mustn't confuse her with Mrs. Hemans, the way you've confused Keats with Yeats. If you do that people will laugh at you. Good-by."

Adam was mortified to learn of his mistake about Keats, though indeed he had been misled partly by Mr. Flood's unscientific method and completely by the bookseller with the authoritative whiskers. If the latter, who was the flower of Grafton Street culture, maintained that there existed no such poet as Yeats, or if such a poet did exist, his real name was Keats, how could Adam doubt it? Yet he found some comfort in the fact that Keats was not an Irish poet, for he had failed to find in his works more than odd statements here and there which he could understand. The poems seemed a jumble of jawbreaking words which he could hardly make scan when he read them aloud; and he knew from Mr. Flood

that if any poetry did not sound grand when you read it aloud it simply was not poetry. Of what he could understand there was little with which he agreed, and he thought Mr. Keats had an experience of life quite unlike his own. He appeared to have been a gentleman of unlimited means, fond of "Elgin" marbles, which was no doubt some Scotch variety of that ancient game, and that was an agreeable trait in his florid and bizarre character. But what was one to make of such eccentricity as led him to apologize to his friend Mr. Hayden for not having eagle's wings? Did any one ever hear of a man with eagle's wings or wings of any kind?

Clearly he had been wasting his time, his eyes and the precious oil in the bull's eye lantern, reading the poetry of Mr. Keats, who was not an Irishman but a cockney from London, born and bred. He put the little book away, determined to waste his time no more. Yet that very night he woke to find himself sitting up in bed by the bull's eye lantern and the book open in his hand. He thought this witchcraft, but he surrendered to it.

The next morning he asked Father Innocent after he had been to confession and was leaving the box, "What is a Grecian urn?"

"I don't know, my dotey boy," he answered, "I never heard of such a thing. You'd better ask them at Belvedere."



## CHAPTER XIX

### JOSEPHINE

THAT was a happy summer-time between Adam's first and second year at Belvedere. Most of it he passed with relatives of Father Innocent, who had a little house at Sandy Cove, which backed on the seashore. You could descend to the beach by stone steps from the garden gate and when the tide was out you could climb along the rocks all the way to Kingstown Harbor and right round to the fort at the entrance, but no one had ever done so because it was too far. If you went the other way you came to the Forty Foot Hole, where you could bathe, but Adam did not bathe there because Mrs. O'Meagher, under whose care he temporarily found himself, believed that forty feet of water would drown you more surely than twelve. Adam, himself, calculated that the danger was increased three and one-third fold.

Mrs. O'Meagher had twin sons, Patrick and Columba, who were going to be priests, and a daughter Josephine, who was going to be a nun. Josephine was older by a few years than Adam, but in the parlor there was a photograph of her as she was at Adam's age, sitting on the knee of a gentleman Adam took to be her father, but she laughed and said he was nothing of the

kind. He was only Mr. Macarthy. Adam rather liked the look of Mr. Macarthy, though he did not think Josephine ought to sit on the knee of any gentleman who was not her father or else her uncle, Father Innocent. He did not venture to express this opinion. He inquired about Mr. Macarthy, but learnt nothing. Columba said, "We haven't seen him for a long time."

Mr. O'Meagher was in prison for a political offense. He had said to an assembly in Galway "that Dublin Castle rule ought to be destroyed," and the next day a man had broken a window in the Dublin General Post Office. It was proved that this man came from Galway, that he had attended a Sinn Fein meeting, on at least two occasions in his life, and that he had asked if the General Post Office were not Dublin Castle. Both were returned for trial and the man from Galway being refused bail, Mr. O'Meagher declined to make use of it for himself. His wife explained to Adam that he was tortured in prison. He was a delicate little man and the authorities were so frightened of his dying on their hands that they crammed him like a capon and gave him no exercise.

Meanwhile the thirteen-year-old aspirants for the priesthood spent their holidays fighting in the garden, the subject of contention being, the comparative sanctity of St. Francis d'Assisi and St. Francis de Sales. Josephine, who was nearly two years older, pooh-poohed both saints, and vaunted gently her own St. Anthony of Padua. But she did not offer to fight for him, which Adam thought very sensible of her, for what is the good

of fighting about saints, who had thought it wrong to fight about themselves?

All the family were kind to Adam, but Josephine kindest of all. She was a quiet, motherly person, and, as he was small for his years, she loved to take him on her lap, and tell him stories about St. Anthony of Padua. So, much of his holiday was passed in sleep, for St. Anthony was a powerful saint, but not strong enough to keep you awake on a summer day, with a pretty young woman, rocking you about in her lap. To Josephine he dedicated his first serious effort at poetry:—

What a happy chap  
Am I in your lap,  
Where I have been,  
Dear Josephine.

Behold my happiness,  
If I may so express  
Myself when I have been,  
Not far from Josephine.

Josephine was surprisingly pleased with this, and made a clean copy of it to send to her favorite sister at the Convent of the Little Sisters of the Holy Ghost, Bray, where it was, of course, read by Reverend Mother, who passed it on to the convent chaplain, who posted it to Father Innocent, who, not understanding what was in his correspondent's mind, proclaimed it a masterpiece,

and congratulated Mr. Flood, S.J., on Adam's progress under his direction. He produced the *ipsissima verba* and made the Jesuit read them in the street, or rather between the crossing of O'Connell Bridge and Westmoreland Street, amidst a whirl of competing cars and trams.

"Hum!" said Mr. Flood, "very nice indeed. Perhaps rather too ordinary, but very nice. Undoubtedly Macfadden will be one of our greatest poets if he perseveres. Application, that's what he wants."

"Could Tom Moore have done it better?" asked Father Innocent point blank.

Mr. Flood smiled. That was not the sort of question to which a Jesuit ought to answer Yes or No, so he encircled it in this fashion. "What could Tom Moore not do? What might not Adam Macfadden do? But, was the present the future or the future the past? Was what was true of one thing necessarily true in precisely the same sense of something else? And yet who should say which was which?" He took off his hat to Father Innocent, and left him in a state of mind as confused as his own. But he was a thoroughly kind, if exalted man, and he wrote to Adam, congratulating him on his poem and submitting this amplification as making it more effective as a recitation.

Behold my happiness,  
If I may so express  
Myself when I have been  
Near kind Miss Josephine!

Miss Josephine is kind,  
Because her noble mind  
Impels her to be so,  
That heav'nwards she may go.

So therefore I'll not sigh  
When I behold her die.  
For God doth her require  
To help to swell His choir  
His high and heavenly choir,  
In the Land of Heart's Desire.

Adam was delighted with this communication and with Mr. Flood's poem, particularly as it did not pretend to be more than an extension of his own, and he might therefore claim to be the original begetter of it. Miss Josephine also pleased him by affecting to prefer the germ from which Mr. Flood had developed it. Both were astonished at his knowing anything about it, and, if Miss Josephine had any suspicion on the subject, she kept it to herself. The Little Sister of the Holy Ghost, preserved an icy silence in her reply and turned the letter on the necessity of going to confession every week, if one was to retain any hope of ever entering heaven.

Meanwhile Josephine rocked Adam in her arms, and, at times forgot all about becoming a nun. Yet he never forgot that this was her predestined future, and it added an exquisite poignancy to his dreams in her lap. He asked her one day why she was called Josephine.

She answered, "You know the statues in the hall."

Adam could not deny it. They were the most striking objects in the house. One represented the Sacred Heart, in the predominating tone of red, the other Napoleon Bonaparte, in the predominating tone of blue. They had been bought as a pair and balanced each other very nicely; for, apart from their color, and their essential symbols, there was little difference between them.

"Well," said Miss O'Meagher, "when father was young he used to think Napoleon was the greatest man that ever lived, and Napoleon's wife was called Josephine."

Adam's heart stirred within him. "I think Napoleon was the greatest man that ever lived," he said, and tried to call up some evidence of the fact, but could only remember that he had been beaten in 1815 at the Battle of Waterloo.

Miss Josephine shook her head. "Oh, no, father knows better now. Michael Davitt was the greatest man that ever lived. Napoleon was just like every other soldier, cruel and mean and treacherous. Look at the way he treated Josephine."

"That was rotten," Adam agreed. He judged from her tone that he had treated her after the fashion of Henry VIII. He could not remember that his history book mentioned Madame Bonaparte at all, but he was prepared to be guided by Miss O'Meagher, who combined the attributes of Minerva, with those of Juno and Venus, and could mention without hesitation such obscure dates as the Bull of Pope Adrian, and the discovery of America. Adam was considered pretty good at dates

but could arrive at any particular item only by calling over his whole stores, beginning with the coming of St. Patrick in 400, and ending with the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Bill in 1828. That the people you read of in history were anything more than names, ticketed to certain numbers, had not so far occurred to him.

He was interested in Napoleon because Napoleon's wife had been called Josephine, and he was subconsciously in love with, among others, a young lady who had been called after Napoleon's wife. But he never thought of Napoleon as a real person who once reigned at Paris, as he thought of Haroun-al-Raschid, who had reigned at Bagdad. Not until he read *Tom Burke of Ours* did Napoleon come alive to him. He commenced the book at Sandy Cove, but the early part, describing Tom's treatment by his father, depressed him too much, and he abandoned it. If Josephine had bade him read it he would have persevered, but it was only her brothers who praised it. He found that they would rather have been soldiers than priests, but there was, so far, no Irish Army, and no self-respecting Irishman could go into the British Army, and the French Army were all infidels, and the German Army all bullies, and the Italian Army all excommunicate, and the Spanish Army you couldn't call an army at all, and the Portuguese were atheists, and the American Army was only used to suppress strikes and Red Indians, and the Russian Army either Cossacks who were savages or policemen who were worse. Practically the only possible army was the Aus-

trian, and their father would not hear of that, as he considered the Emperor Francis Joseph to be an old hypocrite. So they decided to become priests, as that too, was a noble and self-sacrificing life, though Latin and theology were no end of a bore. They were healthy, jolly, dullish boys, were Patrick and Columba, and gentleness itself with Adam if cruel hard on each other's noses, whose shapeliness had been sacrificed on the altars of the saints.

But they were common clay compared with their sister, Josephine. He decided that of all women she was most like to the Virgin Mary, so like that in his dreams he confounded their images, but he said nothing of this, for he was learning reticence. He remained from first to last, of this summer holiday, the little boy she rocked in her lap. It was not until he had returned to Dublin, and was called from sleep by the bells of St. George's Church, to think on things past, present, and to come, that he realized that he loved Josephine O'Meagher, more even than he had loved Caroline Brady, and Caroline Brady was already dead, he felt sure just now she must be dead, and Josephine O'Meagher would be a nun, before he would be old enough to marry her. And what was the use of wealth in this world that went always wrong, a world that among all its mighty armies had none in which a man might worthily serve. A world in which whole oceans of love washed aimlessly as flood and ebb below the phases of the moon.

He stole out of bed, lit the bull's eye lantern, and



opened the squat and dumpy Keats, where he had left a marker at the Ode to a Grecian Urn.

“Thou still unravished bride of quietness,  
Thou foster child of silence and slow time,  
Silvan historian that canst thus express  
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme.  
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape  
Of deities, or mortals, or of both?  
In Tempe or the vales of Arcady.  
What men or gods are these? What maidens  
loath?  
What mad pursuit, what struggles to escape!  
What pipes and timbrels, what wild ecstasy!”

It seemed to make better sense than it did two months ago. They had a Grecian urn at the O’Meagher’s. Mrs. O’Meagher said that Mr. O’Meagher had said that it was made in Germany. Anyhow it was not what Adam had expected. Patrick said urns were for making tea. Columba said they were for burying people. Josephine said she didn’t see that their urn was much use for anything. Mrs. O’Meagher said everything was of some use. Josephine had never heard of an “Ode to a Grecian Urn,” though she thought her father had Keats among his books. She never read her father’s books. She read only what she brought home from school, prizes, and such. Her prizes were sillier than his, all about saints. She was half a nun already . . . and yet she had held him for hours in her arms, and kissed him freely.

Suddenly jealousy gripped him. He had sat on her knee and loved her. She had allowed herself to be photographed sitting on the knee of this Mr. Macarthy. Did she love Mr. Macarthy? Mr. Macarthy was old enough to be her father. She had told him that Mr. Macarthy was very nice, but her mother did not care for him and he never came to Sandy Cove now.

What did it matter? She was going to be a nun. Caroline Brady was dead and Josephine was going to be a nun.

If Caroline Brady had not died she would never have been a nun, she had never sat on Mr. Macarthy's knee. Who was this Mr. Macarthy that any one should sit on his knee? Why did Mrs. O'Meagher never mention him? And why did Josephine remember no more, than that he was very nice? When Josephine was in her convent how much would she remember of Adam, who had sat on her lap? How fickle girls were!

He would remember Josephine O'Meagher to his dying day, nun or no nun . . . and Caroline Brady too, for ever and ever. . . . Well, he would remember, not being fickle like a girl, how he had kissed them both.

## CHAPTER XX

### FATHER TUDOR ARRIVES

LITTLE as he enjoyed returning to dull and stony St. George's Place from the beloved changeful sea and the still more beloved constant Josephine, Adam once back in Dublin looked forward eagerly to the re-opening of school. He had read much during his holidays, books of adventure and exploration such as Patrick and Columba loved, and when not sitting in Miss O'Meagher's lap he had made very successful voyages to the North Pole, the sources of the Nile and Niger, the Andes and the center of the earth. He had visited too, the Blue Lagoon and noticed its resemblance to Dublin Bay, the Dublin Bay of his dreams. He dreamed more and more as time went on, but his dreams were for the time being less horrific than of old and the nymphs that rose from Dublin Bay, however deadly their embrace, pressed him otherwise than steam rollers and had no sardine tins tied to their tails. Sometimes his visions were theological and often he contended with Martin Luther under the lee of His Majesty King George the Fourth's obelisk at Kingstown, and flung him down the embankment on to the railway line to the Carlisle pier; but always followed in time to save him from the final crushing argument advanced by the wheels of the mail; for after all

(although a bad one) he was a priest. A very interesting question to ponder that—how far moral obliquity affected the priestly character. During the next term and still more the term following that, he pondered it much in class.

He was now in the highest class in the Preparatory school, and was usually at the top of it when yachting cruises in the Italian seascapes adorning the four corners of the ceiling did not carry him into eclipse. Father Strong was his new master: a misnamed man, for he was weak and irascible, and flew into tempers which made him the most childish person in the room. But, like all the priests Adam had so far met, he meant well and struggled to do his duty by the unruly and mocking crowd of twelve-year-olds who had not been a week under his care when they discovered his futility. He liked Adam, because Adam, whatever his sins of omission, never played the fool in class or was guilty of intentional disrespect; and Adam liked him because he tried to give the dry bones of their rudimentary studies the dignity proper to the humanities. When he heard them at their Latin grammar he talked to them of Rome, and gave them as a reason for learning Latin, not that it was a subject dear to the heart of the Intermediate Education Board, but that it remained to a great extent the living language of the wise. Although Adam perceived that Father Strong himself was far from wise, he was won by the nobility of this plea and made up his mind to study Latin. He succeeded in so far that he could construe Cæsar better than any other boy in the

class, and had a larger vocabulary, but grammatical rules bothered him: he could not commit a single page of the excellent Dr. Smith's *Principia Latina* to memory. And that in the eyes of Intermediate Education Board is (or was) not to be compensated for by the most Ciceronian Latin prose. Not that Adam ever knew much more about Latin prose composition than that the verb ought to close and clinch a plain statement, but Father Strong suffered less acutely from his efforts to turn *De Bello Gallico* into English than from those of his other pupils. Only when he caught Adam, his mouth open, beaming at the ceiling, heedless of his exposition, did he fly into one of his passions and order him to carry his books to the bottom of the class where sat Alexander Butler, who was said to be nearly twenty and had hair on his chin, over which he dribbled if you asked him the simplest question. Father Strong never guessed that Adam, when disturbed, had been flying with Scipio Africanus under painted sails for Carthage: nor did Adam know what fantasies made life a possibility for Alexander Butler. He only found his company disgraceful and repugnant, though it enabled him to finish his broken voyage in peace; for no sooner had Father Strong sent him into exile than he regretted his show of temper with the one pupil whom it was a pleasure to teach.

Thus, one afternoon, Adam was sitting in solitary disgrace, on the last bench, near the window, with Alexander Butler mumbling and shuffling and fiddling with books and ink bottles on his left. The scarlet of shock and humiliation was fading from his face and he had

withdrawn his eyes from the bitter prospect of North Great George's Street to plow once more the blue Mediterranean above his head. He heard the door open but paid no attention to it; for the worst that could happen to him in one day had happened, and there was nothing to do but beguile himself with the wonders of the deep until it was time to go home. To-morrow he did not doubt that he would be restored to his rightful place at the other end of the room, which was nearer the master and farther from the sea.

Then he was conscious of a creepy feeling of incomprehensible terror, such as he had felt often in his dreams, but only once in real life, the night he had found Old Comet, the police spy, drawing his papers from under his arm outside the Gresham Hotel. He thought he must be dreaming to have such a feeling here now, at Belvedere, where there was much foolishness but, surely, no harm. With an effort he drew his eyes from the ceiling and looked around. His classmates were concentrated on an empty blackboard; Alexander Butler, who could not concentrate on an abstraction, was perseveringly polishing a slate and sobbing with apprehension. Father Strong stood by the blackboard with a piece of chalk in his hand, but his energy paralyzed, for his eyes were nervously turned towards Adam and —Adam's forehead burst into sweat—a shadow that darkened the window near Adam's right.

A deep voice boomed slowly like a funeral bell in Adam's ear. "Tell me, you boy, what is it that your master is going to explain to you?"

Adam did not know, and, if he had known, would have forgotten the instant he met the baleful eyes of the man who stood ominously between him and the light of day. They seemed to be red and yellow eyes, glowing like a wild beast's in a red and savage face. Above and around stood black curly hair, below the harsh white of the dog-collar threw into relief the extreme redness of the thick lips which disclosed, when they opened, teeth that were strong to rend and tear. The features were mobile enough to express many varieties of fury, but, in repose, the brows were contracted and the lips pursed. Had Adam been a little older he would have known that this was the aspect of a lunatic; as it was, his childish instinct told him no more than that he was looking up in the face of a bad priest.

By this time all the class except Alexander Butler, struggling with Sisyphean despair to cleanse away a flaw in his slate, were looking at Adam and the man who had sprung from nowhere to torment him. The voice boomed deeper and the right hand of the ogre made monstrous, threatening movements as though groping for something under the soutane. "Don't waste my time, and the time of the class. It is nearly half-past two. Tell me what Father Strong said he was going to explain to you." Adam stared at him dumfounded while he produced an exceptionally large "ferrule" from under the soutane. "I see you don't know. Hold out your hand."

Father Strong interposed. "Father Tudor," he called

across the room. "I haven't told the boys yet what I was going to show them on the blackboard."

"Quite so!" Father Tudor returned, without withdrawing his eyes from Adam. "And this boy was paying so little attention that he didn't even know that. Hold out your hand at once, I tell you." Adam drearily obeyed. "Left right, left right, left again, right again."

Adam had been slapped before both by Mr. Flood and Father Strong, and, although he did not like it, submitted to it readily; for he knew that etiquette demanded, a nodding acquaintance with the ferrule, and only muffs escaped it altogether. But, to the unpleasantness that attended these experiences he attached no more importance than to the pain of a shock from the electric battery in the laboratory, in the schoolhouse proper, which it was a rare privilege to enjoy. But, to be slapped by Father Tudor was like being struck by lightning. The concussion in his hands vibrated through his whole system, and he fell back on his seat in much the same state of collapse as had been brought about by his father's attack on him at Butt Bridge. He had supposed that the days when he had shame and brutality to fear had passed from his life. This was a rude awakening. . . .

He heard Father Tudor address himself patronizingly to Father Strong. "I will not take up your time any further, now that I have made an example," and off he went. The door had scarcely closed behind him before everything was going on in the class the same as usual, except that Father Strong, flustered out of his small



self-possession, had lost control for the rest of the day, and Adam, under his breath, was consigning Father Tudor to damnation in the foulest terms he could remember to have heard in Sackville Street. As soon as he could dismiss the class Father Strong hurried down to his place and helped him to strap up his books, which his hands were too painful to do unaided.

"I'm sorry this has happened, Adam," he said softly, that not even the idiotic Alexander Butler might hear. "We must try to prevent its happening again."

Adam recognized that his tone was one of a companion in misfortune and answered, "Thank you, sir," very gratefully. Then he added, with a fiery resentment burning his throat and flashing in his eye, "What right had he to slap me?"

He read two answers in the priest's face, but the one given was: "Father Tudor is the new Prefect of Studies. He comes to Belvedere with a great reputation from Clongowes on account of his successes in the Intermediate. . . . But I didn't know that we should have had him here in the Preparatory, or . . ." he looked around to make sure no one was listening, "I'd have warned you."

Adam thanked him once again, and, shaking hands with unwonted affection, they parted.

Adam passed mournfully down the stairs and steps of No. 5 Denmark Street. Opposite the post office he met Father Innocent, more than ever weary and harassed, but he brightened on seeing Adam. "You look tired. How are you getting on?" he asked.

"I'm not getting on," said Adam. "And I never will get on at Belvedere now."

The little priest stared. "You've been overworking to get an idea like that into your head. Mr. Flood told me you were a grand fellow, and Father Tuite says he's not prepared to deny it. Have you collywobbles or something to make you feel tired of school?"

"No," said Adam. "It isn't that, but there's a new Prefect of Studies at Belvedere and he's a bad priest." Adam's voice flew up in his indignation.

"Hush!" whispered Father Innocent entreatingly. "You mustn't talk like that. There's the Vicar of St. George's coming round the corner and will you look who's with him?"

Adam discreetly turned his eyes towards Temple Street and saw the vicar, Mr. Cross, a tallish, clean-shaven man, easy to mistake for a Jesuit were it not for his round, soft hat, which in Ireland is never worn even by a professed priest unless an occasional young curate in the country. On his right side walked or rather marched a lady, a stout lady, an old lady, the lady who had dropped her letter to Mr. Justice Harrison on the pavement outside Gerrard's and had given Adam a penny to take a bath.

When they were well out of earshot Father Innocent went on in a low voice, "I wouldn't for the world have let her hear what you said."

"Who is she?" asked Adam.

"Have I never told you?" said Father Innocent. "She's the worst woman in Dublin and that's a terrible

thing for me to have to say of any woman; for there's very little wickedness in Dublin that I know of, thank God." He dropped his voice yet lower. "You tell me there's a bad priest at Belvedere, and, sure, I know it's not impossible, but, you know yourself, that Father Tuite's a good man, and do you think he'd tolerate a bad man under him?"

"I don't think he would," said Adam, "if he knew. But Father Tudor's only just come, and perhaps he doesn't know him yet."

"Father Tudor, Father Tudor," the little priest repeated. "I seem to have heard that name before. Anyhow, one thing you can depend on it, that if he really is a bad priest and not merely an ordinary man with the failings of us all and gifts to compensate for it, which we have not, he won't remain long at Belvedere." The little priest's hands fell trembling upon the boy's heaving shoulders. "And, anyhow, Adam, my dotey boy, just think, if he does seem to you to be a bad man and a harsh master, of all the other priests at Belvedere who have been so kind to you."

Adam promised that he would try to bear with Father Tudor; but, he had no shadow of doubt in his mind that the worst woman in Dublin was a saint compared with that anointed priest.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE MISTLETOE BOUGH

FATHER TUDOR remained at Belvedere but he did not appear again in the Preparatory School that term. Rumor said that Father Rector had expressly desired him to concentrate his energies on the school proper, so that Belvedere might "capsize the stars," to quote Mr. Flood, at the Intermediate. But even had he revisited Father Strong's class, he would have found it hard to pick a quarrel with Adam Macfadden, for Adam had learned his lesson. The adventure with Father Tudor had taught him that foolish, irascible, Father Strong's heart yearned towards him as tenderly as might that of an ideal elder brother. In response Adam flung himself eagerly into all the work he did for him, and remained permanently at or about the head of class in everything except mathematics, which was taught by another master. As, however, he had started with a good working knowledge of arithmetic, and had a clear head, he could keep himself afloat in this without any trouble. He never drowsed over a sum or a proposition, and, if he allowed himself to embark on an aerial voyage during Father Strong's classes, the priest recalled him gently and harmlessly to Mother Earth.

At Christmas Adam enjoyed his last triumph at Bel-

vedere. He was first in English, Latin, and Christian Doctrine, second in French, third in Arithmetic and Elocution. Father Tuite' was gracious, and Father Tudor smiling ferociously, boomed across the room to Father Strong, "You see my little excursion to your classroom was not altogether thrown away."

Father Strong looked back at him and piped almost as loudly, "Ah, sure, it wasn't that at all." He was indeed a foolish, an irascible man. Father Tudor glanced appealingly at the rector as much as to say, "How can you allow such an imbecile to teach in your school?"

Father Tuite shrugged his shoulders very slightly, not meaning to shrug them at all. He preferred Father Strong to Father Tudor, but he could not defend his silly indiscretion. He was a man of ideas and had thought at one time that it would be interesting to be Head of Belvedere and to modernize the scheme of education there. He had lost that illusion and wished to be out of it. Father Tudor's zeal for doing the inevitably dirty work of all educational establishments, was a relief to him. Parents complained of his severity, but he observed some valuable conventions. He confined his punishments to the ferrule, and did not break slates on the boys' heads as had happened to Father Tuite himself, when he was a small boy at Belvedere, in the ground-floor room to the left of the hall door of No. 6. Besides Father Tudor's methods, however displeasing to him, promised to prove successful at the Intermediate, and Father Muldoon's fiat had gone forth, that the Jesuit Schools of Ireland, must be second to

none in the Intermediate Examinations. The ultimate responsibility rested with him and not with Father Tuite, the philosophical lobe of whose brain doubted of the efficacy of corporal punishment at all.

During the Christmas holidays he wrote in this spirit to Father Muldoon. "Father Tudor, whose energy as Prefect of Studies I hope I have always praised as it deserves, tells me that your protégé, Adam Macfadden, who did well at our recent examinations, would very possibly pass in the Junior Grade of the Intermediate, this coming year, if taken out of the Preparatory School, and put under Mr. O'Meagher, in Third of Grammar. Father Strong, Macfadden's present master, resents very much Father Tudor's interference, and I do not like the principle of a move in the middle of a year, though I consented to it last year when it was clearly in the interests of all concerned. I am bound, however, to say, that Adam is a very promising if whimsical boy, and Father Tudor's hopes may be right. In any case it is for you to decide what we are to do in the matter."

Father Muldoon replied verbally. "You'd better do as Tudor says. O'Meagher is a smart young fellow, and I'm afraid dear old Strong is a bit of a mollicoddle, he doesn't seem to do much good with his class."

"He's been very successful with boys of Macfadden's stamp, willing but highly strung," said the rector.

"We can't have favoritism," returned the provincial. "I'd be sorry to hear you encourage that at Belvedere. Send along Macfadden to Mr. O'Meagher and we'll see what he makes of him."

While this cloud was gathering Adam was spending his Christmas joyfully at Sandy Cove with the O'Meaghers, but not so joyfully as the summer. Three months had woefully changed the aspect of the garden and the sea beyond. The garden was muddy, dark, and weather-beaten. The sea which had played in the rock-pools on the sunlight, now drove before the bitter south-east wind across the reefs to batter the garden steps. One had been whipped away and the place gaped hideously with crumbling mortar, like the hole in the jaw of some foul giant's skull. And four months had passed in the lives of the young people of the house and in his own. Josephine did not offer to take him in her lap. On the other hand, he noticed that the photograph of her sitting in Mr. Macarthy's lap had disappeared, and encouraged by this knowledge, and by Patrick and Columba, he kissed her under the mistletoe that hung in the hall between the Sacred Heart and Napoleon Bonaparte. A jocund and a sweet experience. But when he had done it for the tenth time she said that was enough. And the next day his heart fell, coming downstairs, to perceive that there was no more mistletoe.

Mr. O'Meagher caught Adam looking wistfully at the place where it had been. "My daughter burnt it this morning before going to mass, for fear there'd be none of her left to become a nun," he said, with an air of grave apology. Mr. O'Meagher had only just come out of Mountjoy Prison, and his hair had not yet grown, so he looked rather a plain little man, but he had glowing eyes behind his queer green spectacles and a warmth of

humor which almost consoled Adam for Josephine's coldness. He explained to Adam that it was "all nonsense Josephine going to be a nun. It was her mother and that dreadful old Turk at Bray had put her up to it. I was against it, and what's more, Macarthy was against it, but you don't know Mr. Macarthy, do you?"

Adam said he did not know Mr. Macarthy. He tried to express his regret, but Mr. O'Meagher cut him short. "You must know Macarthy," said he. "You and he were made for one another. Macarthy is the greatest man in Ireland. Though, mind you, I disagree with everything he says, except about Josephine. And now my wife's forbidden him the house, because we agree, and she doesn't——" He broke off. "Sure, I'd be happier at Mountjoy all my life, thinking of the dreadful things I'd say when I got out, than Josephine would be in a convent, knowing that she'll never get out. I mean, of course, when the first blatherumskite has worn off."

"Can't you prevent her?" asked Adam.

Mr. O'Meagher looked away guiltily. "That's what Macarthy says, and I suppose I could if I was man enough," he said. "But I am not, except when I'm addressing a meeting and telling them to do the things I ought to be doing meself." He dropped his voice, somewhat theatrically. "You see I've the great misfortune to be afraid of me wife. It's not that she ever beats me with her fists; though I've no doubt she could if she tried. It's moral power she has over me and



that's not fair when you come to think of it. Now Macarthy's not a bit afraid of her, for she has no moral power over him and that's why she says he's immoral and can't bear the sight of him."

Adam could not make up his mind whether Mr. O'Meagher was joking or not. He insisted that he ought to have enough pluck to see that his daughter did not enter a convent.

"I know you're right," said Mr. O'Meagher. "You're the wisest young man of your years I've ever come across. You might be Patrick or Columba's grandfather. But you don't know what it is to be married to my wife, do you?"

Adam answered that he did not, and inquired whether Mr. Macarthy did, a question which seemed to surprise Mr. O'Meagher.

"I never thought of such a thing," said Mr. O'Meagher, "and I don't suppose he has either. But not being married to my wife, you see, I have the advantage of you, for I know what a terror she is, and you see she has the whiphand of me, for she says she would have been a nun herself, if I hadn't coaxed her out of it. And if I do the same with Josephine I have two generations of spoiled nuns on my conscience."

"And is it she who's turning Patrick and Columba into priests?" asked Adam.

"Well, I've had a hand in that myself," Mr. O'Meagher admitted. "They're fit for nothing else, poor lads, unless they emigrate. And if they were fit for anything better, sure there's nothing better for them to do, while

Dublin Castle stands one stone on another. I've never been able to teach them Gælic."

"What's that?" Adam inquired.

Mr. O'Meagher struck an attitude of comic horror. "What's Gælic?" he repeated. "Glory be to God and Belvedere must be a queer sort of school if you ask me that."

"Will you let the child come in to his breakfast, and not keep him blathering there in the cold?" called Mrs. O'Meagher from the dining-room.

Her husband took Adam's hand and whispered in his ear: "Save me from her, and don't repeat what I've told you about the mistletoe, and not a word about Macarthy. She has a great respect for you because she thinks you're like John the Baptist, and Josephine might dance before you till she wore out her heels. But I know you better, my lad. You and I are birds of a feather. Save me now and I'll teach you Gælic."

They went in to breakfast, Mr. Meagher, very solemn and sheepish, his head down as though there was no hope for him in this world. He fed gloomily and said nothing.

"What's the matter with you, father, this morning?" asked Mrs. O'Meagher. "I didn't mean to speak crossly to you just now."

"Oh, it isn't that at all I'm thinking of," he assured her. "You know I've no resentment if you hit me with the coal shovel."

Mrs. O'Meagher smiled faintly. "Ah, don't talk like that before Adam or he'll think you mean it."

"Mr. Macfadden understands me perfectly," he said. "There's a rare lot of sympathy between us. He was advising me just now how to treat yourself."

"What did he say?" asked Mrs. O'Meagher, her smile broadening, while Adam sought to conceal himself in his cup.

"I wouldn't like to repeat it," said her husband, "for it was more practical than polite, but I'd be sorry for Adam's wife if she ever tries to bully him the way you bully me, and I hope you'll all mark that," said he, with a side glance at his daughter.

"I don't bully you," said Mrs. O'Meagher, with half real indignation.

"It's too late to say that now," returned her husband shortly. "Adam knows all about it."

Josephine's face was in harmony with her mother's, amused yet protestant, but Patrick and Columba roared with laughter.

"Tell us how Adam is going to treat his wife," they cried. "Do tell us that, father?"

But Mr. O'Meagher went on quietly eating bread and butter until their clamor died down. Then he asked his wife in his most absent-minded manner, "Is it twenty years that Josephine is older than Adam?"

Mrs. O'Meagher clashed her cup against her saucer. "Ah, what rubbish you're talking. Sure, you ought to know the age of your own daughter."

Mr. O'Meagher's face took a look of injured innocence. "Did I say I didn't know her age?"

"You let on," cried the twins.

Mr. O'Meagher turned to Adam. "You're the only one I can get any sense out of in my own house, Mrs. O'Meagher's own house, I would mean to say. Can you tell me how old my daughter is?"

"Fifteen and seven months," said Adam promptly.

His host raised his eyebrows to where his hair ought to have met them. "Is that all, Mr. Macfadden? Then I suppose you and my daughter are about the same age."

The long-baited Josephine was drawn at last. "Adam is nearly six years younger than me," she said, with unnatural coldness.

"I, not me," said her father suavely. "You'll have to learn grammar if you're going to be a nun." He turned to Adam. "A cold morning like this, I dare say, you'd be glad to warm your hands at Josephine's cheeks."

Poor Josephine bolted. Adam did not quite understand why. "You might have kept that joke till the girl had finished her breakfast," said Mrs. O'Meagher, with real reproach. "She was out in the cold to Holy Communion this morning, while you were still snoring in bed."

"Don't let on you know anything about that," said her husband, outstaring her with a roguish solemnity, "or I'll think it was you that took down the mistletoe in the hall. I'm going to put it up again after breakfast."

But somehow he did not, nor did he attempt to teach Adam Gælic. That Christmas remained in Adam's mind as a promise that never came to anything. The day before he returned to Dublin he carried into effect the

first deliberate exploit he ever adventured in the field of love. In a greengrocer's near Glasthule Church he bought a sprig of mistletoe, and, when bedtime came, he managed to catch Josephine in her dressing-gown, a towel over her arm, going to the bath. Patrick and Columba were already trumpeting in the sleep of the just. From downstairs came muffled eloquence of Mr. O'Meagher, reading the draft of a speech to his wife.

"Josephine," called Adam softly.

She turned with a start, her long red hair swinging over her shoulders. "You, Adam, why aren't you asleep?"

In an instant he was beside her, the mistletoe in his hand. "Because of you. Look!" He held the mistletoe up.

She laughed softly, fluttering, with disdain perhaps, but perceptibly fluttering. "You're not tall enough to put it over my head."

Too wise to try, he answered only, "Never mind. Won't you kiss me anyhow?" He felt her fluttering, fluttering, fluttering, though she believed she stood quite still. Some mysterious inherited intuition told him that her heart was beating faster than his own. He pressed her closer, repeating, with his lips little higher than her breast, so that she scarcely heard, "Won't you kiss me, anyhow? I love you."

Then her lips slowly and solemnly descended on his. He thought he had never been so kissed before. She thought she must never be so kissed again.

The door below opened. Josephine threw up her head

so suddenly that Adam slipped on the floor, and trying to save himself upset a chair.

"Who's that breaking the furniture?" Mr. O'Meagher called from below.

"It's me," said Adam, with indiscreet promptitude, and Josephine more innocent yet than he, made things worse by adding, "It was all my fault."

"You needn't tell me that," said her father, with a chuckle. "Well I know, but you'll never be able to sue Adam for breach of promise, if you tell the jury that." A whisk of skirts, announcing the approach of Mrs. O'Meagher, he added brusquely, "Stop your pillow-fighting, children, and go to bed."

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE BULL'S EYE LANTERN BURNS OUT

THE Josephine Adam met at breakfast the next morning might have been a nun already. Her hair was brushed off her forehead and tied in a pigtail. She wore one of her school uniforms, she was unrecognizable.

Mr. O'Meagher regarded her with a sardonic smile. "You remind me of Mountjoy this morning," he said. "It's a lovely place of its kind, but the wrong kind of place."

"What's the matter with Josephine?" asked her mother, up in arms to protect her from her father's ribaldry.

"Did I say there was anything the matter with her?" he protested. "Isn't she the living image of you?"

Mrs. O'Meagher was, in Adam's eyes, very much like most women, only a lot nicer. She could not always repress her indignation. "I can tell you," she said spiritedly, "that when I was Josephine's age, no one ever saw me looking like a guy."

Tears started into Josephine's eyes but she said nothing. Her father rose from his place and passed behind her. "I won't have your mother laughing at you," he said, and, as he spoke, with nimble fingers he loosened

her hair and flung it tumbling over her shoulders, as Adam had seen it the night before.

He was exquisitely thrilled, and thought now for sure her eyes must find his, but she sat downcast to the end of breakfast, silent, heedless, as though the hair over which her father and mother contended, and Adam gloated, were not sprung from the body which was the temple of her soul.

Her hair was still flowing about her, in the disorder which her father's hands had made, when the family assembled in the hall, between the Sacred Heart and Napoleon, to bid Adam good-by. This time she bent publicly to kiss him, but he saw by the strange light in her eyes that she was going to imitate her mother and touch his forehead. Angry at the thought he turned his back on her, and leapt out into the street where Mr. O'Meagher was waiting to take him to the station.

When the latter returned, his wife said to him, with a sigh, "Adam's getting quite the big boy. Did you notice he doesn't like to be kissed any more?"

Mr. O'Meagher spread out before the fire the tails of a garment which many believed to be an overcoat, but his tailor called a frock, and was composed of Irish or perhaps Japanese materials, and said, "Adam and I are going to be Trappists as soon as you divorce me."

His wife answered, "I'm always asking you not to joke about serious subjects," and he replied, "You might as well ask me to take a rope and hang myself." And then Mrs. O'Meagher cried softly, until he kissed her tears away. They played this little comedy pretty often,



but he did not enjoy it as much as she, for he felt those bewitching tears of hers made misty his view of life. If he could keep cool when his wife wept, perhaps Josephine. . . .

Anyhow, the worst hadn't happened yet, and two years might make a difference. If only Adam weren't quite so young and his family history quite so unpromising. No one could guess his parentage from his mind and bearing. Still there was no knowing when the bitter fruit might burst amidst the fragrant flower and leaf. Sexually the child was precocious, though the signs he had given were devoid of ugliness. Mr. O'Meagher took it for granted that he glimpsed more clearly than his wife, the possibilities of what might happen between the two children. To her they were merely a girl and a boy. The girl already comfortably labeled for her destination. The boy to be labeled in another year or two. He said to himself that it would never occur to her that Josephine might be seized by a great passion, such as had dragged her from tranquility to this stormy, tearful; glorious passage through life, in the arms of Mr. O'Meagher. Two such men do not come in one century. Even the sons she had borne him had only his moral worth. They lacked his worldly genius. It was enough that they and their sister should be privileged to lift their prayers to heaven for his feebleness, when he was dead. Her brother Innocent had told her that she might make her mind easy about the safety of her husband's soul, but she knew his own mind was far from easy and his name never absent from his prayers. Father Innocent shared

her belief in Mr. O'Meagher's colossal intellect, and looked up to him as Lucifer, the yet unfallen Morning Star. Mr. O'Meagher treated Father Innocent with the humble courtesy a St. Bernard dog shows to a baby. When they were engaged to be married he had referred to Innocent, then at Maynooth, as the fool of the family and had brazened it out that, if she did not see he was, she must be the fool of the family herself, which was ridiculous, as she had had the sense to marry him. . . . And then there was the question of Macarthy. . . . She would have broken off the engagement only Innocent had begged her not, as O'Meagher was the greatest and wisest man in Ireland. . . . Innocent had never known Macarthy. . . . And, if she threw him over, he might go and marry a Protestant. O'Meagher thought that she was not so much afraid of this as that he, being then in his Napoleonic period, would have carried her off by violence.

Anyhow, they had, as Mr. O'Meagher considered, married and lived happily ever after, whereas Adam's love troubles were but faintly adumbrated, when he put him into the train at Sandy Cove, bidding him to remember that "faint heart never won fair lady," and that the first thing he ought to do was to learn Gælic. Adam had privately perused O'Growny's grammar, finding it among his host's books, but it awakened little response from his emotions or his intellect. He did not feel that he would ever want to speak it as he wanted to speak English, nor did he want to read it as he wanted to read French. It was a more difficult language than Latin and yet had none

of its utility. A medical prescription in Latin would be made up for you in any country where drugs were scientifically compounded. A Gælic prescription you could not count on getting made up in Dublin itself. Ancestor worship was not a form of egoism which his experience of life encouraged. He did not look backwards to the Golden Age. Josephine knew Gælic too, but then she knew Latin much better than he did, and French, and geography, and music, and drawing. Indeed he was under the impression that she knew everything until he found that she had never heard of Keats.

But he thought of Letters less than Love as the train puffed him grumpily through the Kingstown cutting, down the seaward slope of which he had so often flung Martin Luther in his dreams. In his future dreams he would contend only with Josephine, at least he thought so, plodding the short mile through the railway cutting. Emerging at Kingstown Station his ideas traveled farther. He could see Howth, harshly outlined against violet clouds, through the sharp winter air cleared by the east wind. The first time he had seen it he was with Caroline Brady. She would never have treated him as Josephine had done to-day. There was a steamer coming out of the Liffey. The wind carried her smoke to what he knew from Patrick, was her starboard side, towards the train, so that in gusts she disappeared altogether. "The air hath bubbles as the water hath," Mr. Flood had told him. He was a grand man for language. But this was not the Bristol boat he saw, for Columba said the Bristol boat went out at night. He remembered

that in Count Alley he used to hear the hooter when it started. When he was very young it frightened him. Afterwards he liked it. It seemed to say, "I'm not going to stand this any longer." It seemed as if the ship said, "Let me go, let me go," and they had to let her go whoever they were. He wondered why she ever came back. He had not been to see the Bristol boat since. . . . He had been very much in love with Caroline Brady. It was queer that kiss she gave him in Dalkey Tunnel. Perhaps she gave it to him in that very railway carriage. the Number was 243, what was the number of the other? He ought to have made a note of that. The numbers of the first and last coaches, on the Waterford train, were 19 and 38. Caroline Brady had thought it clever of him to know that thirty-eight was twice nineteen.

Caroline-Brady was quite different from Josephine O'Meagher, they were both older than himself. . . . No, Caroline was not, for she was dead. . . . Was she really dead or was that only his fancy? Queer that you should be wanting to kiss somebody and yet not be sure whether they were alive or dead. He must really have cared very little for poor Caroline, that he never found out what became of her when she fell ill. But then, in his father's lifetime, he never had a chance to care about himself, or any one else. Why hadn't he found out about her when he was at Pleasant Street? There was no one there chasing and belting him all day? He was working too hard for his keep. It was only since he had been free from the risk of starvation and had

gone to Belvedere and read poetry, that he had felt the necessity of love. And now it seemed to him the greatest necessity of all since Josephine O'Meagher. . . . What! The words came to him suddenly. "Hath thee in thrall." Now he understood the meaning of that queer poem of Mr. Keats the Cockney, "La Belle Dame sans Merci" (meaning the Beautiful Lady without a Thank You). He remembered some of it:—

"O what can ail thee, knight at arms,  
Alone and palely loitering?  
The sedge has withered from the lake,  
And no birds sing."

"O what can ail thee, knight at arms!  
So haggard and so woebegone? . . ."

What on earth came after that? Something about a hare or a rabbit? Keats was no good at rhymes, he only gave you one just now and then, when you'd given up looking for it, not like Scott, who always kept his promises even if he kept you waiting, and Moore and Goldsmith, decent Irishmen who paid up at once. Moore was the easiest of all, and Goldsmith the friendliest and Scott the most poetical:—

"And each St. Clair was buried there,  
With candle, with book, and with knell;  
But the sea-caves rung, and the wild birds sung,  
The dirge of lovely Rosabelle."

That was poetry. Mr. Keats wrote blather compared with that. Still the Belle Dame fitted his present mood. How on earth did it go on:—

“I see a lily on thy brow . . .  
I met a lady in the meads . . .  
I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
She looked at me as she did love  
And made sweet moan.”

He found this particularly applicable to his case and Josephine's; for he had, in a sense, made a garland for her head and she had, in a sense, made sweet moan and she had more than looked at him “as she did love.” He had not made her bracelets or a fragrant zone: he did not know what a fragrant zone was unless it was a poetical license for fragrant ozone, which was a comprehensible term in itself, though he did not see how you could make it unless you caught it by the sea and bottled it. Perhaps making it scent, mixing it with lavender water or eau de Cologne. The lady who asked her friend Mr. Moore to play “Love's Dream” on the piano at Pleasant Street was very fond of scent, perhaps she knew how a fragrant zone was made. He might ask his mother to ask her. He had not seen his mother for a long time, nor Mr. O'Toole. They seemed to belong to a murky past remote from the genteel world he lived in now. Though Mr. O'Toole looked a gentleman when he dressed as one, and at Pleasant Street

he was always so dressed. He remembered that poor Miss or Mrs. Robinson said Mr. O'Toole was a charming man, and he had wondered why. He was a bitter man, said Miss or Mrs. Robinson, because of his wrongs. What were Mr. O'Toole's wrongs? He always felt he was a villain, although since he dressed so well he had partly forgotten the feeling. What was a villain? Perhaps he was one himself if he only knew. Or would he be when he grew up . . . if . . . Josephine was going to be a nun. He shivered.

"O what can ail thee, knight at arms?  
Alone and palely loitering. . . ."

A smell of gas and bilge water woke him up. The express was palely loitering through Ringsend into Westland Row.

He was nearly in his teens now, another year, and a man of means. He had eighteenpence in his pocket. He took a car. It sidled down to the roadway, then the horse snorted with pleasure at the light weight behind it, and threw out its legs in a sort of gallop, striking fire from the tramlines while the wheels bounded grandly on the great paving stones, and Adam bounced on the cushions above them; but he was not going to hold on, not he; it was nobler to fall off than to hold on. Yet he was glad to get off the stones of Brunswick Street which really walloped him more than was quite enjoyable and made him bite his tongue twice. Bump, bump, over Butt Bridge. There lay the Bristol steamer right enough. She was getting up steam already. Up the hill to Mount-

joy Square. It was grand to drive past Father Tuite in Gardiner's Place and to salute him like a gentleman, grander still to pretend not to see Father Tudor at the corner of Temple Street. Grandest of all to give the jarvey sixpence more than he had any sort of right to expect, and to see him touch his hat and hear him say, "Thank your honor and God bless you." And to think he used to say that himself on the chance of making a halfpenny! Life was magnificent and only fools would want to loiter palely through it. It was not one sort of poetry but all sorts of poetry put together. He could love Josephine O'Meagher until St. George's bells had rung the end of time; but no Beautiful Lady without a "thank you" was going to hold him in thrall.

And yet again, when he was undressed and getting into bed, the bull's eye lantern forced its way out of the cupboard and a dumpy little book sprang after it, and fell open at a page thumb-marked like Lady Bland's letter to Judge Harrison; but on a grander scale:—

"Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
Thy song, not ever can these trees be bare;  
Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve,  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair."



Keats had it after all over Scott. The lady who lived for ever on the Grecian Urn transcended lovely Rosabelle, eaten long ago by fishes. She was of the essence of life; for she could but would not die. Neither sea nor land change suffered she: hers was the now that has a future but no past. . . .

The bull's eye lantern burned out and wakened poor Miss Gannon from dreams of brimstone falling on the cities of the plain; but no earthly odor could summon Adam from that land where he would always love and Josephine be fair.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE JESUIT BOY'S SHORT WAY TO HEAVEN

IN the basement of St. George's Place dwelt St. Kevin, the kitchen cat and Attracta: possibly they shared the same apartment. On the ground floor was Mr. Gannon, a scion of the wealthy branch of the landlady's family and a medical student; but a strictly brought-up Catholic or she would not have trusted him in so precarious a situation. The drawing-room floor was occupied by a junior barrister of great age: his atmosphere was whiskified, but his moral character impeccable. He enjoyed as a bachelor a life-interest in the name of Murphy, and Miss Gannon saw that he and young Mr. Gannon together went to long mass at Gardiner's Street on Sunday. She, herself, brought Adam to eleven o'clock mass, paying sixpence as they went in and sitting with the nobility and gentry in the sanctuary. It was by Father Muldoon's express direction that they did this; but Adam ignored his further implied command that he should take a Jesuit Confessor. That would never be unless Father Innocent wished it, and he knew very well Father Innocent did not.

Adam had the front room on the second floor, and, in that behind him, arranged also as a bed sitting-room and packed with small photographs of unnumbered priests, mostly in heaven and their names forgotten even

by her, Miss Gannon passed her innocent nights, haunted by a smell of paraffin for which she never could account. Her reason, too little exercised to be efficient, told her that if it came from anywhere, which was doubtful, it must come from the top floor tenanted by a person she never referred to otherwise than as "that Frenchman" or addressed but as "Mr. Frenchman." When she was notably out of temper, as on the monthly Sunday she went to early mass, she called him "that old Frenchman." To Adam he appeared to be younger than Mr. Murphy, B.L., whom she persisted to treat as a promising youth.

The reason that Miss Gannon regarded Mr. Murphy as of promise and Mr. Frenchman as not, was that neither by fair means nor foul could she induce the latter to fulfil his religious duties. When he first came to her for lodging she had asked him if he were a Protestant (for she was often troubled by Protestants wanting rooms, on account of her being so near St. George's Church), and he had answered an emphatic negative. Therefore he must be a Catholic like all other Frenchmen (except that Captain Dryfoo who was a Jew and ought to have been hung); but never once had he left her house on a Sunday in time to hear a mass. It was a scandal, and she would not have tolerated him for a moment in the house but that she had to live, and for twenty years now he had been paying his bills more punctually than any other lodger she had ever housed. It was an honor to have a gentleman like Mr. Murphy occupying the drawing-rooms, but she could not have afforded it but for that Frenchman up in the garret.

Adam was more interested in that Frenchman than in any other of his fellow lodgers, but he felt shy of approaching him, partly because he knew it might lead to difficulties with Miss Gannon and still more because Father Innocent, from whom he hid nothing, would have frowned on his acquaintance with any one, except his brother-in-law (a man of genius not to be measured by mortals), who did not go to mass. That Frenchman was a music-master by profession, and, although he received no pupils at St. George's Place, Adam often heard his piano giving forth soft sounds as pleasing as they were unfamiliar. On Friday nights the man with the obsolescent cornet, on whose performance Adam's first theories of the sublime and beautiful were based, would come down by the church and play: —

“When other lips and o—o—o—other . . .”

and then pause and look up for a signal from the Frenchman's window. If nothing happened he would take his second wind and continue:—

“. . . hearts

Their tales of love shall tell.”

and so on to the bitter, or, as it still seemed to Adam, the rather sweet if flat and unworthy end. But, if the Frenchman were at home, he would hasten down to the hall door and they would have a brotherly little talk ending with a “Thank your honor and God bless

you," from the troubador, who would go hence and be heard of no more until the following Friday. Adam noticed that if the wind was from the north he disappeared towards the south, if from the south towards the north. Always to leeward of St. George's Church. But if the Frenchman were out he was careless whither he roved, and the more passionate or better sustained notes of his cornet vibrated through the neighborhood for an hour after his bodily presence had passed from the precincts of St. George's Church.

Thanks to Father Innocent, Adam was an exceptionally honest boy and he seldom told lies which he fully recognized as lies at the moment of their enunciation: he might exaggerate the importance of his part in the Cosmos, but he would scorn to obtain by dubious words any material good or thus to save his skin. On the other hand, the higher principles of honor were as little taught at Belvedere as in Marlborough Street, and he had no scruple about indulging his inquiring spirit in the study of the outside of that Frenchman's letters when he found them in the hall or even attempting to read his post cards. These were written in an extraordinary variety of styles as, "Mr. Baire," "H. Bare, Esq.," "Mr. Bare," "All Illustrissimo Signore Enrico Bero," "Mr. H. Bair," "Monsieur Henri Bayère," "Herr Beijer." One from India was addressed to "Serenest Wisely Mare Bear." On the back ran the mysterious message: "If you make side winks at Dina Myte we have not laid with her."

It was not surprising that Miss Gannon even after twenty years, should find it easier to call him "Mr.

Frenchman" than choose the right name from so many. But, to Adam's young brain, it was clear that if you called him Mosyou Bare he would recognize himself as the person to whom you spoke. And so he did, and, when Adam said to him on the staircase, lifting his cap, "Bonjewer, Mosyou Bare," he would lift his tall hat and say, "Goot tay, Mistare Macfatten." And if he met him carrying his books to or from Belvedere he would add, "Larening, always larening! Do not forget dare is also Luff and Lippertee." Now "larening" was presumably his way of saying "learning," but what was "Luff" if not (as explained by Columba O'Meagher) a marine term meaning to put the helm to port, and "Lippertee" suggested nothing except Lipton's Tea, a contemptible suggestion.

On the Black Monday that Adam returned to Belvedere, after spending his Christmas holidays at Sandy Cove, it being then twenty-five minutes past nine by St. George's clock, a trifle fast at the beginning of the week, he was overtaken by that Frenchman in Temple Street and the usual greetings passed. Then Adam raised his voice. "What exactly do you mean, Mosyou Bare, by Luff and Lippertee?"

That Frenchman eased his pace to look down on him, for he was a tall man, and walked naturally with long defiant strides. "You, an Irishman, ask that!" Adam understood him to say, "Why, die Liebe, die Freiheit, l'Amour, la liberté." He marched on, leaving Adam prickling with electricity from the energy he had put into the words "L'Amour, la liberté," there was no mis-

taking what they meant. One minute of half-past nine by Findlater's Church: he passed through the sullen gateway at Belvedere and along the covered way to the School House Chapel. Once upon a time the Preparatory boys heard mass in the Oratory at No. 5. He hated the schoolhouse proper because it seemed to lie in Father Tudor's domain. Sometimes Father Tudor said mass. It was queer to think of Father Tudor saying mass. It was a wonder God did not strike Father Tudor dead for having the impudence to say mass. Perhaps He was waiting to catch Father Tudor, the way Father Tudor went about trying to catch other people. Some day He'd cry, "I've got you," and snap him away to the depths of hell. That would be grand.

Father Elphinstone was saying mass this morning with Charlie Bridgeman and Joe Macinerny as acolytes. Father Elphinstone was rather like Father Innocent but older and more learned. If Father Innocent wished it, he wouldn't mind going to Confession to him. "L'amour, la liberté." French was a good language: he wished he were a Frenchman like Mosyou Bare. "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité," that was what it said on French stamps. Mr. O'Meagher, too, said they were grand words, only, he said, the French themselves did not know what they meant. . . . Amen! That was over. The day's work was begun. He noticed one or two new boys as they streamed out of chapel. Outside, pressing his back against the staircase all black, white, and red, hovered Father Tudor, peremptory, thunderous, fussy. Adam passed him with averted eyes, a cuffed left hand

caught him and thrust him back, and the Prefect of Studies boomed in his ear: "Macfadden, upstairs, Third of Grammar."

The blow was too sudden, too severe for protest. While Adam was waiting for God to catch Father Tudor, Father Tudor had stolen a march and caught him. "L'amour, la liberté," what a mockery were the words singing in his ears as he climbed upstairs to the Third of Grammar classroom. He had never been upstairs before, except to the laboratory where Father Elphinstone sometimes treated them to electric shocks when Mr. Tomlinson, the science master, was away. He asked a boy which was Third Grammar. He answered: "At the end of the passage. You'll be under a holy terror spawned by old Tudor himself."

"What's his name?" asked Adam, conjuring up a hideous Afrite.

"O'Meagher," said his informant. "Tim O'Meagher. He's not been at it long, but he's a muddy terror. Tudor's whelp, I tell you."

All that Adam took in of this speech was the word O'Meagher. And that was a good omen. He could not imagine any one of the name being personally hostile to himself. If this O'Meagher were worthy of his name Adam would work so hard for him that Tudor or no Tudor, he could not find any fault with him.

Mr. Timothy O'Meagher's reception of him was not unfriendly. It was even hearty in a perfunctory and anxious way. He was a small, sturdy man, with a desperately eager manner, outstanding ears that heard



and held everything said to him, and brightly foolish eyes. He was Father Tudor's triumph, discovered by him at Limerick, carried off to Clongowes and borne triumphantly on his afflatus through Intermediate Exhibitions to the National University and the novitiate. Father Tudor, while still himself a novice, had noted the receptivity of his ears, had determined they should receive nothing but what came from him or had his approval, had indeed, sought to mold the mind of Timothy O'Meagher in the likeness of his own. This he could not do. Timothy O'Meagher had no mind: if he inherited any from his parents it had fallen to pieces under Father Tudor's energy; but he was an excellent instrument for the reproduction of the cold cream of Father Tudor's educational ideals, without reference to the fanaticism which inspired them. Mr. O'Meagher knew exactly how and why his scholastic career had been so brilliant; he knew exactly how to impart the information to all other boys whose ears were big enough to take it in. You had only to concentrate your whole being on Mr. O'Meagher's instruction and you were unmade for life, as life is understood by good Catholics in Ireland: you might even get a well-paid post in the Civil Service. And you could enjoy bodily success without peril to your soul; for it was an open secret that Mr. O'Meagher was the author, under the guise of "Scholasticus" of *The Jesuit Boy's Short Way to Heaven*, said to have been very nearly, but not quite, published by Burns and Oates, and now to be obtained at Gill's for one shilling. Father Tuite thought the original,

when he read it in manuscript, somewhat vulgar and pedestrian. Father Elphinstone said it was dreadful nonsense and might have been written by a mad Dominican. Father Muldoon had frowned upon it at first but, after Father Tudor had rewritten it with a certain fire the author lacked and offered to find a tactful publisher, the provincial's bann was withdrawn. Like everything else Timothy O'Meagher had done, it was a success, and, from that day, Father Tudor and he outweighed Father Tuite and Father Elphinstone in the Provincial's estimate alike as educationalists and theologians.

This was the first paragraph in the book:—

"I see a handkerchief in your pocket. It is a white handkerchief. You have not had it long. Take it and tie a knot in it, a hard knot. Always tie a knot in every clean handkerchief you get. Then, when you wipe your nose, you will be reminded that one day you will be scourged with knotted ropes in Purgatory. Be sure, while there is time, that you will not be scourged in hell.

"When tempted by bad thoughts, wipe your nose.

"In evil company, wipe your nose.

"If you have nothing else to do, wipe your nose."

Adam was so anxious to please Mr. O'Meagher that he bought his book and would have read it but that this opening paragraph distressed him too much. It convinced him that he could never please Mr. O'Meagher. He noticed too, that the boys in Third of Grammar either had not read Mr. O'Meagher's opening paragraph, or were not afraid of going to hell. They seldom, or never, wiped their noses: few, indeed, had handker-

chiefs in which a knot would attract attention. The whole class lived in too great a hustle to regard the decencies of life. Mr. O'Meagher kept them scampering through his short ways to success in the Intermediate Junior Grade subjects, and woe betide you if you failed to follow him, for his ferrule was scampering over your fingers before you knew where you were.

But Adam saw that poor Timothy took no real pleasure in punishing you, he had not a mind for it like Father Tudor; he hurt you badly not through adroitness, but through clumsiness. His one idea was to hustle from one thing to another, if he had had to give you medicine he would have flung it in your face; that was the way you got things done in this bustling vale of tears. The boys scrambled into class in the morning, bleary-eyed and sullen except for the brilliant fellows with big ears, they scrambled through their lessons, they scrambled downstairs again and up again, finally about half of them scrambled home at three and the other half waited huddled together the coming of Father Tudor, who would slap them some more for faults for which Mr. O'Meagher had already slapped them.

At this hour of the day Adam felt almost sorrier for Timothy O'Meagher than for the boys he betrayed to Father Tudor. Once the proper class was over and the vivacity of teaching had gone out of his face, the lively eyes declined into pitiful foolishness, the man shrank into nothing. He listened as nervously as the victims for the executioner's step in the corridor. He vaguely dreaded the scene to follow. He was only the lion's

jackal, Father Tudor's creature, and merely despicable. So it would be for half a century to come; that was his short way to heaven.

Mr. O'Meagher continued to be friendly with Adam for a week, two weeks, even three. "I know all about you," he would say. "You're brilliant, you'll do splendidly. All you want is application. Work, work, work, morning, noon, and night. Then you'll do splendidly."

Adam worked, according to his lights he worked hard, but he preferred Keats to Alvarez's Latin Prosody and knew, from the first, that he was doomed, sooner or later, to wait for Father Tudor after the boys with big ears had gone home.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE CHURCH MILITANT

THE catastrophe came unexpectedly after all. He had told Father Innocent of his increasing difficulties at Belvedere and of the fatuity of Tudor's creature; and Father Innocent, sad and worn and hollow-eyed, had begged him to make the best of things. "It's been a cruel world for you, my dotey boy," he said. "But surely, even if some hours in every week are a trial to you, your life as a whole is happier than it was?"

"I don't know," said Adam. "I've more to eat and a better bed and a chance to keep clean and all that, but I'd rather be selling papers outside the Gresham any day than sit listening to old O'Meagher gabbling nonsense and knowing that Tudor may sail in at any moment and catch me over the back with his ferrule if he thinks I'm not listening hard enough to please him."

"Father Tudor," repeated the little priest. "Father Tudor, h'm. There's something I'm going to say to you in confidence about Father Tudor. You'll promise me it'll go no farther?"

Adam smiled. "I think perhaps I know what it is. He had a great shock to him when he was young and he's got a screw loose?"

Father Innocent looked a reproof. "It's not a laugh-

ing matter for the poor man to be mad. It's a great misfortune."

"It's a great misfortune for me," said Adam, "to have a madman waiting behind the doors for me with a thing he could brain me with in his hand. And it isn't me only. . . . I give him no chance to get at me, but I've seen him cut a piece out of Jack Walsh's thumb."

"That must have been an accident," said Father Innocent. "Poor Father Tudor's not so mad as to do a thing like that on purpose."

"I wonder," said Adam. "I've seen him look like a demon in the pantomime, rolling his eyes and tongue as if he were going to have a fit."

"Men who are doing their best may have fits," said the little priest gently. "You or I or any one might even be afflicted with delusions."

"Do you think that men like Father Tudor ought to be allowed to teach?" Adam asked point blank.

"I do not," admitted Father Innocent. "But I think that boys like yourself ought to put up with it as well as you can and try not to make things worse for them."

So that night Adam worked at his lessons particularly hard and came to school next day so word-perfect that Mr. O'Meagher could not catch him out. But he had not learned them in the way Mr. O'Meagher had taught them, and whenever he questioned Adam and received the right answer in what he considered the wrong way, he gave a discontented sniff. This irritated Adam as much as his contempt of his short way to learning irri-

tated him. He put to him many questions, always with the same results. At last he turned his back on him in dudgeon and gave himself to the fruitful long-eared. It was the first class of the day, they were reading Ovid. Adam had construed and parsed his line not incorrectly in schoolboy fashion, his troubles were over for the moment and he knew he would do equally well with everything else. His mind was at ease. He regretted the absence of mural decorations in the new classroom but there was a large map of the world on Mercator's projection which showed you where you could go, though it gave you no painted sails to carry you. He vaguely heard Mr. O'Meagher linking the *Metamorphoses* with some catchword of his own. "You all know that I am Mr. O'Meagher, S.J. You all know S.J. stand for Societas Jesuitium, or Company of Jesus. Now, keep these letters in your mind and think of all the other things connected with the lesson they can stand for, as Sublime Jupiter, Smiling Juno. . . . You, Fallon, can you suggest anything? Come now, words beginning S.J. mentioned in Ovid."

"Silly Owl, sir."

"Fallon, you never attend to what I am saying. Hold out your hand." Three hurried cracks and a crash on an ink-bottle followed.

"Hazleton, you. Two words beginning S.J."

"Sunny Jim, sir."

"Hazleton, you are almost as bad as Fallon. Hold out your hand." A crash on Hazleton's hand and another on the donor's knees. Adam was looking con-

templatively at Mr. O'Meagher and thinking what a clumsy Jack in the Box he was to hit himself when he meant to hit Hazleton, when their eyes met. "Macfadden, I suppose you have not been attending either. Two words beginning S.J. which might occur to you after reading what we have read just now?"

Adam looked at the passage and answered:—

"Supreme Judge."

Now this was a better answer than Mr. O'Meagher had expected, but they were not the words he had in his own mind and they had been arrived at by a process which was not his. Adam was thinking of Ovid and not of his short way to learn Ovid. So he sniffed and said: "Those the only words you can think of beginning S.J.?"

Adam felt himself on his mettle, and said, "Superb Joy."

Mr. O'Meagher sniffed twice indignantly. "Superb Joy. Whoever heard of such a thing? What is joy? Eating and drinking and so on. How could that be superb? That's a nice reward you give me for all the trouble I've taken trying to drive some method into your lazy skull. Have you no better notion of what S.J. stand for?" The question was not honestly meant, he anticipated a silly answer and sniffed before it came. But when it came it astonished him.

"S.J.," said Adam, feeling himself for the moment to be the true center of the world, "might stand for Sniffing Jackal." He had not said the words ere he repented them, for he saw Mr. O'Meagher dwindle to



nothing in front of him, an opponent unworthy of his steel. He would have apologized if the man had stood up to him, but, instead, he turned away to his desk, scribbled feverishly on a piece of paper, and called, "Joe Carberry." Joe Carberry had the biggest ears in the class, he was sure to win a Two Pounds Prize for Books. He would never read them, because he could not read books unless some one was there to reduce them to a formula. "Joe Carberry, take this to Father Tudor. Be quick about it. Hustle!"

Adam clenched his teeth. He was in for it now. The jackal knew himself for what he was. He chuckled at the grim humor of it. Father Tudor saw the humor of it too. He came in grinning all over, with little savage snorts to cover the fact that he was laughing at his poor jackal, hurt in beating up the game.

"What's this? What's this?" he said repeatedly, pacing up and down and round the room, so that all the boys could see the long ferrule waving like a caudal appendage behind him. "What's this? Who has been twisting the lion's tail? I have the name of the person here in my hand, but I can't quite read it . . . because it was written in a hurry. The master of this class is a busy man, he has no time to waste on writing clearly the names of foolish, impudent, wretched little boys. He has no time to punish them himself. He has to send for me, whose duty it is to punish foolish, impudent, lazy, wretched little boys. I wonder which of all the foolish, impudent, lazy, wretched little boys I see before me I have to punish now. I wonder whose name it is written

on the paper in my hand. It is not your own name, Joe Carberry, is it?"

Joe Carberry answered in an ecstasy of mirth at Father Tudor's humor, "No, sir, it is not. Catch me at it."

"Be serious, Joe Carberry," boomed Father Tudor, and, turning away, his ferrule somehow caught the young gentleman across the shoulders. Joe Carberry howled. Father Tudor burst into a roar of leonine laughter. "Pride goeth before a fall, Joe Carberry. Always be serious when you see me. You never know what may happen. I look into the very hearts of idle, lazy, impudent little boys. I know that there is no such thing as a really good little boy. Boys are only made good by men like myself who are appointed to go through life finding out their faults and punishing them. If it were not for men like myself hell would be full of such idle, lazy, impudent, good-for-nothing little boys, as I see before me. Why doesn't the idle, lazy, impudent little boy whose name I can't read, speak up like a man and save me from slapping every other boy as he deserves. . . . I will ask Adam Macfadden to tell me, if he knows, why a certain idle, impudent little boy does not speak up like a man and save me from slapping every one all round." He strode over to Adam and tapped the desk with force. "Stand up, Macfadden, and answer me."

Adam stood up, trembling but unawed. "I am not impudent or lazy," he said.

"So!" said Father Tudor, laying down his ferrule on the desk in front of Adam. "I have made a mistake."

He turned to Mr. O'Meagher, with affected concern. "It seems I have misread your letter. Who is the impudent boy whom you think it essential for me to punish?"

Mr. O'Meagher blushed to the roots of his hair, his lively eyes fell to the ground. "It was Adam Macfadden's name I put in my note, Father Tudor," he said faintly, and wished he were back in Limerick and had never heard of Father Tudor. It was not so long ago that Father Tudor had hit him, he was not quite sure he might not do it again if he contraried him.

"Ah, I see," said Father Tudor. "I see. My impression was right, that it was Macfadden who was idle and impudent." He made a parade of baring his right arm to the elbow. It was a muscular arm, with black down on it. "You think you were not idle and impudent, Macfadden, at least you say you were not idle or impertinent, but, unfortunately, Macfadden, Mr. O'Meagher thinks otherwise. What am I to believe, Macfadden, tell me that?" He affected to wait patiently for the reply which he knew would not come. Then he sighed heavily, "I see. You have nothing to say in your defense. Hold out your hand." He lifted the ferrule high in the air as Adam held out his hand, then, the ferrule still in the air, Father Tudor went on: "I think I have seen that hand before. I know every hand I have seen before. Where was it? I remember now. Ah, I remember now. I had to punish you for inattention in the Preparatory School. You see, I forget nothing. You are the only boy I have had to

punish in the Preparatory School. I see, I must be severe with you. Hold your hand well out. I don't want to break any ink-bottles." He gave the ferrule two preliminary waves in the air then, just as Adam braced his strength to meet it, he lowered it and said to Mr. O'Meagher, "Let me see, for what exactly was it you wished me to punish Macfadden?" The reply was inaudible but Father Tudor answered his own question. "Ah, yes, of course, idle and impudent." Up went the ferrule again and came down on the instant with enough force to drive the knuckles of Adam's left hand against the back of his desk. "You clumsy fellow," boomed Father Tudor. "Why don't you hold your hand out properly? Keep it up, keep it up." He flicked the fingers with the ferrule as he carried it upwards to wave once more in the air. Adam met the blazing red eyes as defiantly as he could, thinking to himself, "Perhaps God will strike him dead now, now He has him surely!" A change came over Father Tudor's face, the grimace of rage melted into an almost more hateful grin. He pulled out his watch and dropped the ferrule. "Eleven o'clock," he said. "I'm sorry, Mr. O'Meagher, but I've no more time to deal with this wretched, idle, impudent boy now." He struck Adam with the side of the ferrule across the shoulders. "Out there, by the wall, Macfadden, and stand there until I have time to deal with you further. I must apologize to you, Mr. O'Meagher, for this delay. You will understand that it is for the best. You know me."

"Yes, Father Tudor," said Mr. O'Meagher, and meekly

opened the door for the splendid despot, who had ruled over his whole life, to pass out.

Adam took his stand defiantly by the wall. His left hand felt as though a brick had fallen on it from a height, the knuckles were blue where they had struck against his desk. He could not remember that he had ever been hit so hard by any one before, and he knew that worse was to follow it. But, for Father Innocent's sake, he was going to bear it. He was partly to blame, since he had lost his temper with Tim O'Meagher and checked him. He had no right to do that. O'Meagher was not really such a bad chap, he was merely a cad and a bit of an idiot. He couldn't teach but he meant well.

Eleven to twelve was mathematics, taken by Mr. Hagan, a lay master. He and Adam were pretty good friends. "Sit down, Macfadden," he said. "We're late. Not my fault."

"Please, sir," Adam answered huskily, "Father Tudor told me to stand until he came back."

Mr. Hagan raised his eyebrows. "You out for punishment!" He whistled, but said nothing more. It would have been as much as his place was worth to fly in the face of the Prefect of Studies.

A quarter past eleven, said St. George's bells, half-past, a quarter to twelve. Mr. Hagan noticed that the flush had gone from Adam's cheeks, he was pale, and his knees were knocking. "Father Tudor must have forgotten you, Macfadden," he said. "You'd better sit down."

"Thank you, sir," Adam muttered, and obeyed. Now that the hot fit was spent he felt depressed and miserable. His left hand was still insensible, both hands would be insensible before the day was out. He did not care about that if only he could get it over. Waiting for Tudor made him feel sick. Sick in his head and in his entrails.

Twelve o'clock called the bells of St. George's Church. The class broke up for the luncheon interval. The boys made for the door. He rose languidly and followed. He felt frightened of the stairs, but he got down them somehow. At the bottom a cuffed arm seized him, and a voice boomed, "Who gave you leave to come downstairs?"

"I thought . . ."

"Don't think. Upstairs again, and don't dare to stir from the place I put you until I have punished you for your impudence to Mr. O'Meagher."

If Adam had not felt so ill he would have bolted for freedom then and there. But Father Tudor had him firmly by the arm and he had no strength to resist. Thoroughly shaken he crawled upstairs again and drifted back to his place, leaning against the hot water pipes between the windows from which you could see St. George's Church. The bells struck a quarter past twelve. The boys were coming upstairs again, and taking their luncheon bread-and-butter out of newspaper wrappings. The sight of the others eating made him feel deadly sick. He dropped on his knees. "Will you look at Macfadden?" some one cried. He felt a score of

eyes riveted on him, and quickly regained his feet.

"Were you saying your prayers?" one boy asked.

Adam nodded.

"Praying to be let off?" said Fallon contemptuously.

Adam did not reply; he did not condescend to tell Fallon or any one else, that his prayer had been that God might save him from the disgrace of being sick in the classroom and that He might condemn Father Tudor, once and for all, to eternal perdition. As he stood up he had a momentary illusion that the first part of his petition had been answered; about the second he was less hopeful.

Half-past twelve—writing class; another lay master who had no interest in Adam nor Adam in him. A quarter to one. One. Mr. Hagan reappeared to take the Elementary Science Class. As he passed Adam he paused to say under his breath, "I'm sorry, but Father Tudor has forbidden me point blank to let you sit down. You do understand it's not my fault."

"Thank your honor," said Adam, "and God bless you." He wondered why Mr. Hagan looked at him as if he were mad. Perhaps he was going mad. His head felt very queer. He had been standing a long time. But he had been used to that. He had stood for hours outside the Gresham. That was in the fresh air. A quarter past one. He was very hot about the head and hips, very cold about the shoulders and feet. He hoped he was not going to be sick after all. A quarter to two. Mr. Hagan was trying to whisper something to him.

What was it? Oh, something about Tudor. Tudor was coming, was he? Let him come. The sooner the better. He did not feel quite so sick now. Two o'clock. Mr. Hagan was gone but Father Tudor was not yet come. Mr. O'Meagher, very subdued and uneasy, was taking the last class of the day; he sedulously avoided a glance at any one in Adam's neighborhood. A quarter past two, half-past. Only half an hour more. His feet were asleep, he felt clammy all over, but he was buoyed up by the thought that the day was nearly done and that even for Father Innocent's sake he would never risk passing such a day again. He did not count to end his life in Richmond Asylum.

A quarter to three. The big-eared boys were beginning to pack up their books to go home. He edged down softly towards the window on his left and shot a glance at St. George's Church. Joy, Superb Joy, it was seven minutes to three. Soon he would be looking at the other face of that clock from his own dear little room. . . . The door clicked, the class hushed. Father Tudor's voice boomed: "What's this? What's this? Who is that boy I see looking out of the window?"

So he had waited till the end. What was it that his mother had once called somebody, when he was a little chap, before he sold newspapers? A "crawling snake." Tudor was that and many other things besides. At the moment he looked like a mad bull with his, "What's this, what's this?" Anyhow this was going to be the end of him so far as Adam was concerned. Since God had not damned him perhaps he really was only a poor



lunatic, more wretched in himself than with all his perverse ingenuity he could make others. Adam held out his hand that he might let him vent his wrath on him and be done with it. He knew Father Innocent would never ask him to come back to Belvedere after to-day. He waited for Father Tudor to strike, but Father Tudor did not strike. He began to feel sick again, in spite of himself he trembled, partly through fear of being sick, partly through fear of Father Tudor. That fear had infected the whole class.

Three o'clock rang out cheerily on St. George's bells. All down the corridor there was a burst of clamor from boys released from school. But, in the Third of Grammar, none stirred. Father Tudor stared at Adam as though he were considering where to commence an experiment in vivisection.

"Mr. O'Meagher," he boomed. "I am sorry to have to keep you and the class in on this fellow Macfadden's account. But, sometimes, we have to make a public example. So I know you will blame him and not me. I would, of course, prefer to let him off." He produced the ferrule and laughed loudly. The class tittered to please him, but quietly lest they should share the fate of Joe Carberry. "Mr. O'Meagher, can you give me any reason for letting Macfadden off? We know that you have told us that he is impudent and idle, but, perhaps, you can recall something in his favor. Has he, for example, ever shown any industry or attention?" He looked at Adam. "Now I'm going to hear if there is any loophole of escape for you," he said, and laid the

ferrule on the hot water pipe beside Adam so that he was tempted to seize it and strike him across the face with it. But he waited patiently for the comedy of Father Tudor's mercy to play itself out.

"I've nothing to say for, or against Macfadden, Father Tudor," quavered Mr. O'Meagher. "He's neither the best nor the worst boy in the class. And he knows his lessons in a way that is not very satisfactory to me, but I can't say that he is habitually idle. In fact he is rather above than below the average."

"I see," boomed Father Tudor. "Clever, but careless and disobedient. Just the sort of boy it is my special function to keep on the right path, that very narrow path which all boys leave if they get the chance." He caught up the ferrule and swung it about him as he might swing an Indian club. "Let me see. It was at your Latin lesson this morning, I think you told me, Macfadden behaved so abominably, Mr. O'Meagher?"

"It was then I thought I had reasonable ground to complain of his conduct, Father Tudor."

"I see. Macfadden considers Latin unworthy of his attention. Is there any subject in which he is good enough to take an interest?" Father Tudor's voice was genially judicial, but the ferrule swung rustling against his soutane and rapping against Adam's knees.

Mr. O'Meagher's chief desire now was to get Adam off if he could; at all events to end the suspense melting his own marrow. "He's very good indeed at Christian Doctrine," said he.

Father Tudor frowned. "Hum," he boomed heavily.

"He knows his Catechism and yet he remains idle and impudent. It is incredible. I must see, Macfadden, if you really know your Catechism. You have only to answer me one elementary question and I will, perhaps, let you off your punishment or part of your punishment. At all events, not to waste the time of others, if you answer correctly I'll let you go home now. You will be glad of that, won't you?"

"Yes, sir," said Adam, pulling himself together at the thought that he was really to go free at last. Sick as he felt he did not think Tudor could puzzle him in the Catechism. He had learned it by heart at the Mater Hospital. Father Innocent had explained any difficulties that had bothered him and no one had ever tripped him up in it at Belvedere. Even Mr. O'Meagher had just borne witness to his proficiency. . . . If only his head did not ache.

"Tell me, Macfadden," said Father Tudor, tapping his own left hand with the ferrule, "if you really know your Catechism. How many persons are there in God?"

"Three," cried Adam joyfully, and wondered why Joe Carberry sniggered.

"Is that supposed to be an answer to my question?" Father Tudor's ferrule flew up as his voice thundered, "Three what?"

"Three persons, of course," Adam cried again. "Really distinct and equal in all things: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

"Nonsense, nonsense. Hold out your hand." Down

came the ferrule with the wrath of Father Tudor's God behind it.

It seemed to Adam, after the third stroke, that things became a blur. His whole body was dull with pain, at any moment he would be sick. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve.

Father Tudor stopped breathless and panted between the words, as he roared "Now perhaps you will remember that in God there are not three persons, but three Divine Persons."

And Adam, lifting his clenched hands above his head, shrieked in his face, "Damn you and your three Divine Persons."

A deadly silence reigned in the Third of Grammar classroom as the bells of St. George's Church tolled a quarter past three.

Then Adam's entrails followed his spirit in revolt and he vomited over Father Tudor's soutane and boots.

## CHAPTER XXV

### ADAM CROSSES THE LIFFEY

THE class broke up in confusion. "Disgusting ragamuffin!" bellowed Father Tudor, and, like a mediæval demon exorcised by holy water, he fled from the room, leaving his ferrule behind him. In an instant Fallon had hidden it somewhere round his waist. Mr. O'Meagher said nothing. He was hopelessly out of his depths. "You'd better be off and don't let this happen again," he said to Adam, who answered sullenly, "It never will."

Somehow, Adam, not troubling to collect his books, crawled down to the yard, found some water to put on his face and hands, dried himself in his handkerchief, and walked as quickly as he could through the covered way to the street. He was not fully conscious of what he did, he crossed to George's Street.

Fallon overtook him. "That was grand what you did to Tudor," he said.

"I couldn't help it," Adam explained, almost inaudibly.

"Go on," cried Fallon. "Don't spoil it by saying it was an accident. All the decent fellows think it was grand. Sullivan says he'll try to do it to-morrow if

he can. How did you manage to do it just at the right moment?"

"I tell you it was an accident," Adam groaned, sick again at the thought of it.

"Well, it was a jolly splendid accident, that's all I can say," said Fallon. "You got Tudor fine," and he thought of hurrying off after his fellows to tell them that Adam was not really the Homeric champion they supposed.

"Anyhow," said Fallon. "You did mean to damn the Blessed Trinity, didn't you."

"No," said Adam, "I did not."

"Aren't the three Divine Persons the same as the Blessed Trinity? I thought they were?"

"Yes," said Adam.

"Well, you damned them right enough, for I heard you. 'Damn you and your three Divine Persons,' said you to Tudor. It was grand. You'd think he was a Divine person himself, the way he looked at you."

"I didn't mean to say that," said Adam. "I must have said it just as we may say anything in a rage."

"It sounded grand. 'Damn you and your Divine Persons,' " Fallon insisted.

"But it's pure nonsense," Adam remonstrated, with equal pertinacity. "It doesn't mean anything."

"I don't see that. It seems to me no end of a jolly awful curse."

"But, how could you damn God?"

"Why not, if you get the chance. Just as He does you if He gets the chance."

"But no one can damn God but God Himself."

"Oh," said Fallon. "I never thought of that. I suppose it is rather blatherumskite when you come to think of it. But it sounded grand when you said it. Joe Carberry was frightened out of his wits. Anyhow, I've got old Tudor's pandybat under my coat. I'll sell it to you for sixpence."

"Thank you," said Adam. "I've had quite enough of it already."

At the north end of Marlborough Street they parted company, Fallon going west along Great Britain or Parnell Street. "Where are you going? And what have you done with your books?" he asked, as a last question.

"I don't know," was Adam's last answer. Fallon's questions had steadied him a little bit, but he believed himself to be going to Butt Bridge. He could never face Father Innocent and tell him he had damned Father Tudor and his three Divine Persons. It was only yesterday he had promised to do everything in his power to keep his patience with him. If he could have held his tongue and borne his torture as Father Innocent, himself, would have borne it! He felt it was despicable of him to lose his temper with Father Tudor. It wasn't his slapping him he cared about, that was mere brutality such as he had long suffered unquestioningly from his own father, it was the beastly malice of keeping him cooped up in the classroom and standing against the wall, to be mocked at by sneaking fools, like Joe Carberry. It was that had driven him to despair and made

him care no longer whither he went so long as he never went back to Belvedere.

He moved on down Marlborough Street, hurrying past the shop where Mr. O'Toole now carried on some mysterious business, ostensibly connected with newspapers, sporting papers; there were papers in the window, oddly called *The Police News*, with pictures of prize-fighters, race-horses, murderers, and ballet girls. He shared the premises with an odd sort of apothecary, some of whose wares were also in the window; pills that looked like small shot and readymade bandages and bits of hose-pipe. The window frames were lined with picture post cards of the Pro-Cathedral or Nelson's Pillar or the Parnell Memorial or fashionable ladies adjusting their garters and winking at you. It was a queer shop, the Sporting and Medical Stores. Two Trinity boys came out of it, sheepishly, angrily, jingling silver coins in their hands. "I'll swear he's done us over the S.P.," said one.

These words caught Adam's ear as he scuttled past, and told him, what he ought to have guessed before, that his godfather had turned bookmaker. That was the business he carried on under cover of the newspapers and the picture post cards. Adam felt a sudden zest in life at this discovery. Mr. O'Toole could humbug the police but he could not deceive him. Still, it did not give Adam courage to face Father Innocent and tell him that he had been guilty of a kind of blasphemy. For he had been guilty of a kind of blasphemy though he hadn't meant it. Fallon thought he meant it, so did



that sneaking jackass Joe Carberry. He could not face Father Innocent, he could not return to St. George's Place, he could not go to Pleasant Street; but he no longer wanted to drown himself. He wanted to live, he wanted even, immediately, to eat and drink. He had a whole florin in his pocket. He would go forthwith to eat and drink.

Where to eat and drink? That was the imperative question surpassing even the Belvedere crisis and the peril to his soul. The outsides of many restaurants were known to him, but the interior of only one. He did not know the name of it but it was at the other end of Westmoreland Street, near College Street police station. Father Innocent had brought him there once because it was a vegetarian place where you could go on Fridays; besides, it was a grand place where Mr. O'Meagher and all sorts of famous people went. And not so expensive as you would expect; you could have a good meal for sixpence. He scuttled past the Pro-Cathedral, as he had scuttled past Mr. O'Toole's, turned down Sackville Place, and took the tram from Nelson's Pillar to Tom Moore's statue by Trinity College. Even empty-bellied and rather sea-sick, it was pleasant to ride on the top of a tram on a balmy February afternoon, even in a state of mortal sin it was jolly to risk your life jumping off it before it slowed down. And, how grand it was to march into a tea-shop, or a café as the French called it, all alone and order a meal for yourself without any intermediary between you and the pretty and witty young lady who could see that you

got whatever you might choose from a list you could take half an hour to read and perhaps not then understand the quarter of it. Adam was quick to choose. "A pot of tea and two portions of buttered toast," said he.

"Two portions," said the witty, pretty one, noting it down. "Dear me, what a hungry young gentleman you must be."

"So would you be," said Adam, "if you were me."

"Mark, learn, and inwardly digest," said a not very young man sitting opposite. He addressed the girl, but Adam was sure he had met him somewhere before.

"Indeed; now, Mr. Macarthy, you ought to be ashamed of yourself talking about my digestion before the lad," said the girl, and went off.

"I hope you are not shocked by my conversation." He addressed himself this time to Adam, who was looking at him with painful curiosity, for, surely it was on his lap that Josephine O'Meagher had once sat, he who figured in a well-remembered photograph.

"I am not," said Adam. "I'm used to all sorts, though I've not been here before but once. I came with Father Innocent Feeley of Marlborough Street. I dare say you know him."

The man nodded, but only said, "Nice old houses in Marlborough Street."

"A bit slummy it's getting now," said Adam judiciously. "It's not what it was."

"You mean before they built the Pro-Cathedral?"

"Sure, that's a hundred years old," said Adam.

"And how old are you, if the question is not impertinent?"

"I'm going on for thirteen," Adam confessed, and further conversation was interrupted by the arrival of his tea and toast. While eating and drinking he studied the face of the man opposite. He was clean-shaven, with smallish blue eyes, flat nose, and hair white as snow, yet he gave, what Adam thought, a regrettable impression of youth. There was nothing distinctive about his dress, more noticeable was the attire of the man next him, frock coat, wide opening to his double-breasted waistcoat disclosing an enormous bright crimson scarf, but his face was hidden by a newspaper held by long, thin hands; the hands of a nervous, still lively, old man. It occurred to Adam that he had seen those hands and that red scarf somewhere, but, before he could recall where, Mr. Macarthy asked him, "You find Marlborough Street changed much in your time?"

"It gets worse every day," said Adam. "I remember the time when my father said it was a very good address."

"And what does he say now?" Mr. Macarthy asked, without a smile.

"He says nothing now," Adam answered simply. "He's dead."

"I beg your pardon for my curiosity," said Mr. Macarthy, and asked no more questions. Adam would have liked him to go on but he finished his cup and took his bill, his gloves, his hat, and stick. Adam thought he might be any age from twenty to fifty. He laid his

hand on the arm of the man behind the newspaper. "I must get back to the library."

The newspaper dropped and disclosed the white mustache and chin tuft, the close-cropped white hair, the ruddy complexion and still bright eyes of "that Frenchman." "Ah, pardon, pardon," he cried. "I was lost in the speech of Wilson; he is a bourgeois but a great man. What is your Lloyd George compared to him?"

"You are mistaken in supposing that Mr. Lloyd George belongs to me," Mr. Macarthy answered gravely. "I am not a man of property nor am I a great man, but a bourgeois."

"A bourgeois! You!" cried the Frenchman. "My dear Macarthy, you are a man of no time or place. You are a divine person?"

"Which?" asked the other man, but did not wait for an answer.

That Frenchman looked at Adam, not sharing his astonishment at their meeting, and asked, "Which of the divine persons, think you, is our friend like?"

"I wonder," said Adam, "if you mean he's the third."

"Good," said that Frenchman. "Very good. I see there is some elementary education in Ireland after all. Your learning has not been for nothing, it would seem. Have you learnt yet what is love and what is liberty, or are you wise only in Divinity? And, tell me also, why have you been crying?"

Adam, with his mouth full of toast, began by telling him why he had been crying and ended by confessing that he no longer thought of drowning himself but of

stowing himself away in the Bristol boat and working his passage overseas. With his tummy warmed with tea and his headache gone, this seemed to him an adventure of some promise.

"It is interesting," said the Frenchman, "to go to sea. That would say it is more interesting to go to sea than to go to Belvedere. But what of our poor, dear Miss Gannon? What of poor myself if I have to tell her that I met you here on your way to sea and gave you no good advice to return to her?"

"I'm sorry for Miss Gannon," Adam answered. "But I don't feel that she matters very much to anybody . . ."

"You say that, because you do not think her beautiful."

"I don't," retorted Adam. "I say it because she's as hard as nails. She won't care much more than my mother will care."

"Ach," said that Frenchman. "To talk like that is to break the heart."

"The only one who really cares a lot about me," said Adam, "is Father Innocent Feeley."

That Frenchman nodded. "You have made me wonder whether you were old enough to see that. You who could go to sea without asking his blessing, without bidding him farewell!"

"He might have stopped me," said Adam, but tears of shame and regret were welling in his eyes, and one fell among the toast crumbs on his plate. He added pitifully, "I'm not gone yet."

That Frenchman's countenance softened.

"I do not know your Father Innocent Feeley, and I am one of those who declare Clericalism to be their enemy, but, I think, I will take you now to call upon Father Innocent." He called for Adam's bill to be added to his own and led him unresisting from the room. In the street he waved his stick. "We shall drive upon a car. That will be a merriment to distract us from sad thoughts." As the car pulled alongside he went on, "We'll both sit together to help each other to hold on." And to the jarvey he said, "Drive to that horrible building in Marlborough Street they call the Pro-Cathedral, and be quick about it, for I'm an atheist."

The man touched his hat and grinned. "Sure I know your honor well," he declared. "And there's not a word of truth in it."

## CHAPTER XXVI

### FATHER INNOCENT GOES

NOTWITHSTANDING the betterment in his fortunes the joys of car driving had not yet paled for Adam, and that brief scurry from College Green to Marlborough Street had one fine thrill in it, for, at that very spot where Father Innocent had consulted the oracular Mr. Flood, as to Adam's poetical merit, they encountered Father Tudor and the wheels missed his toes by a bare six inches, the step grazed his frock coat and he stared after them to see that Frenchman wave his hand to him reassuringly.

"We nearly had that fellow, your Honor," said the carman, with *sang-froid*. "And I wouldn't have minded if we'd had him altogether."

"You know him?" asked that Frenchman.

"Indeed and I do not, your honor," said the jarvey, "but I never see a man that looks like that, let alone a priest, but I want to let the mare trample on him."

"Ach," said that Frenchman. "You are an artist, Mr. Jarvey. But you may be wrong. I am an anti-clericalist but there are good priests. And, perhaps the best of them have not the prettiest faces."

"I'm a great one for going by the face," the jarvey maintained. "And I've never been wrong yet." He

looked at Adam. "What did you make of him, your honor?"

"He near made an end of me to-day," was Adam's answer.

"Hey!" said that Frenchman. "So it was our dear Tudor. I guessed it the way he looked at us. But it seemed too good to be true."

"What did I tell you?" cried the jarvey triumphantly.

Adam had taken it into his head that that Frenchman would be present at his interview with Father Feeley, and, perhaps, take it upon himself to explain precisely what had happened with Father Tudor at Belvedere; but he felt, on the whole, that he was acting for the best, in leaving him alone once he had assured himself that Father Innocent was at home and could see him. He then remounted the car and was carried south again, nor did he exact any promise from Adam to repeat to him what happened. He merely said, "You know thirty steps upwards will carry you out of any trouble at St. George's Place."

Father Innocent's face was even older than Adam had ever seen it before to-day; also it was stern. The boy felt that the worst part of the whole day was to come now. But that Frenchman had given him courage to face it; for he had blamed him for nothing except the hint of indifference to Father Innocent's feelings. If he looked at him kindly instead of with reproof he would have knelt at his feet and kissed them. Perhaps his eyes told the little priest as much; for his gaze softened



before he opened his lips and said, "So you've come back at last."

"I'd have come at once if I'd dared," said Adam.

"What have I done that you wouldn't come to me when you're in sin?" asked the priest. "What am I for?"

"What am I for?" returned Adam, "that I should be always troubling you?" He was more than half sincere in this, but his tone betrayed the doubt of his own sincerity.

"You have not distressed me so much by what you have done, God forgive me," said Father Innocent, "as by leaving me to hear of it first from others. And I thought, perhaps, I thought perhaps . . . Oh, my dotey, dotey boy!" He caught Adam passionately in his arms and they mingled their tears together, the latter now truly repentant since he found the priest's attitude was one of grief and not of blame. He would have gone through the whole hideous experience with Father Tudor again to win the sweet joy of Father Innocent's loving tears when all was over.

It seemed that earlier in the afternoon Father Tuite had rung up Marlborough Street and asked Father Innocent to call. He had hurried to Belvedere at once, dreading bad news of Adam. Adam saw that he did not find the news as bad as he had dreaded. Father Tuite had told him that the Prefect of Studies had reported Adam to have been guilty of a long list of offenses, culminating in blasphemy, and a particularly revolting assault upon himself, which called for the very

severest corporal and other punishments that could possibly be administered to a boy of his years. Father Innocent had asked if Father Tuite himself had seen Adam and he said "No," that he had been away while the alleged offenses took place, and dropped a hint that they might not have happened had he been on the spot. Father Innocent then suggested that Adam should be heard and Father Tuite willingly agreed; but, when Father Innocent flew off to St. George's Place, Miss Gannon could not tell him anything more than that Adam had gone off as usual in the morning and had not been seen since. Returning to Belvedere with this news he discovered the further sinister fact that Adam's books had been left in the Third of Grammar classroom and Father Tudor now accused Adam of stealing his ferrule.

At this Adam burst out laughing and Father Innocent was constrained to smile wanly at the irrepressibility of his sense of humor. Without mentioning names Adam recounted his conversation with the desperado Fallon.

Father Innocent brightened. "I knew you didn't mean to blaspheme," he said. "I told Father Tuite so and he said Father Elphinstone had also spoken up for you and said it was impossible. Even that poor, wretched little O'Meagher (what a mockery for him to have a great name like that), owned that he didn't think you meant what Father Tudor thought you meant. But he thought you ought to be flogged for losing your temper and spoiling Father Tudor's clothes."

"That was Father Tudor's fault, not mine," said Adam.

"He thought he was doing something clever by keeping me cooped upstairs . . ."

Father Innocent held up his hand. "That was only he forgot . . ."

"He didn't forget to torment me," Adam cried hoarsely. "He didn't forget to turn me back when I'd got to the very bottom of the stairs. If that was forgetfulness he ought to be under lock and key at Richmond."

Father Innocent drooped his head. "You mustn't talk like that, Adam. You must never forget the man's a priest."

"But if he forgets it himself," said Adam relentlessly.

"Even so," answered Father Innocent. "Even supposing he does, and we've no right to suppose it. . . . That is no excuse for you and me to forget it."

"You?" asked Adam, astonished.

"Do you think I've no natural feelings at all?" blurted Father Innocent. "Do you think I can hear of him treating you like that without wanting to go and knock his head off—which, of course, I couldn't do, God help me, for he's twice the man I ever was. But, even if I could take him across my knee and smack him (did any one ever hear of such a thing?) two wrongs wouldn't make a right." . . . He stopped and looked at his watch. "Why, it's near time you were in bed."

He walked up with Adam to St. George's Place, Adam deliciously happy and at ease, clinging to his arm, little dreaming how the tired body ached as he tugged at it in the stress of his grateful emotion. Delicious to climb

St. George's Street beneath the placid stars and think of the despair of life itself that had curdled his blood as he had descended with Fallon, six hours before. Even the façade of Belvedere itself, had no unfriendly look. It was only the hateful, staring red school building behind that he quarreled with. It was there that Tudor reigned and not in the old house, that he associated with Father Tuite from whom he had no unkindness. Still, he was determined that, unless Father Innocent made it the price of his friendship, he would never pass through the sinister gate that led to the schoolhouse again.

He stopped the priest in front of it and pointed to the closed gate and the portal beyond. "You'll never ask me to go through there again?" he asked, trembling with trepidation at his own words.

"God forbid, I ever should, my dotey boy," answered Father Innocent. "But you must remember it is not me alone who will have to decide what is to be done. Anyhow I told Father Tuite I thought it would be better to keep you at home to-morrow, being Saturday, and he agreed with me. Father Tuite, I am sure, has no wish to have you flogged."

Adam's gorge rose at the word. "I'd take a flogging from you," he said. "I'd take anything from you. But if Tudor tries to lay his hands on me again, I'll kill him dead."

The words, flung fiercely out on the night air, echoed against the portico of St. George's Church. "Hist, hist!" the little priest besought him. "Whatever hap-

pens, I promise you, Adam, that so long as I live, Father Tudor will never lay hands on you again."

To Miss Gannon, who was inclined to fall upon Adam tooth and nail for causing her anxiety, he explained that he had been taken ill at Belvedere and had found refuge in the house of a friend, that he must now go straight to bed and be allowed a long sleep in the morning. "No school for a day or two, Miss Gannon." Then he turned to Adam and kissed him on the forehead. "Good-night, my dotey boy. Come down to see me about three to-morrow. And now to bed and sleep just as if there were no such thing as trouble in the world; for there isn't really when you think of the infinite goodness of God."

The door of St. George's Place closed behind him and, with wistful ears, Adam heard his feet drag themselves very slowly to the corner of Temple Street and then die away for ever.

As Adam, too tired to read, blew out his light and turned on his pillow to sleep, the cornet player flung forth the opening bars of his sempiternal song:—

"When other lips and o—o—o—other . . ."

The pause called forth no answer from above. That Frenchman was still out; so he went on:—

" . . . hearts  
Their tales of love shall tell,"

and so on and on to the last vastly tremulous setting of the words.

"That you'll re—mem—e—ember me."

This brazen pathos lulled him to slumber to-night, but, henceforth, its wail was to be unbearable to him.

The next day he lay luxuriously in bed enjoying his breakfast and his Keats and a vast contempt for Father Tudor all at once. But, precisely at three, he rang the bell at the priests' house in Marlborough Street. He noticed there were two old women waiting, in tears, for the door to open.

When at last it did the janitor eyed him balefully. "Father Feeley is it? How many more of you? D'ye think I've nothing else to do but to be running to this blessed door all day . . ."

"But he told me to come," said Adam. "He told me to come at three o'clock."

"Well, he won't tell you to come any more," snapped the man, "for he died this morning."

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THAT FRENCHMAN

THAT day was the first in Adam's life when he thought of the death of others as a loss to himself. His father's decease was news of as great joy to him as the death of the Attorney-General to Mr. Sergeant Macfie; and even his godmother, for all her kindness, had left no real gap in his life. But, with the death of Father Innocent, all virtue crumbled and goodness lost her beauty. It seemed to him, as he turned from the priests' house, that he himself was lying dead inside. Marlborough Street had no reality apart from the House of God beside him. He made for that instinctively, and, pushing through the swinging doors, fell on his knees and prayed, not as of old to the Blessed Virgin but to the new Saint Innocent he visualized as edging his way through the heavenly throng to say a word to God about one Adam Macfadden, who meant well and tried to do no one any harm, though he was greatly harassed by spiteful men and sometimes couldn't help laughing at Holy things. He would make it clear to the Blessed Trinity that Adam hadn't meant to be impudent to Them, but only to Father Tudor, who had used their names to torment him.

And yet, oh, vain and illusory hope! Father Inno-

cent's presence in heaven, to speak for him before the Throne of God, in no way consoled him for the thought that he would never more stand here on earth to defend him from the wrath of man. When Adam turned his back on the Pro-Cathedral and descended the steps, though he did not foresee it, for the last time, he felt that he was now absolutely alone in the world. True, his mother was to be found a few hundred yards away, but he had no desire to seek sympathy from her, even if she could have given it to him. He had forgotten her early ill-treatment of him but that was because he had virtually forgotten her altogether. She was just a blurred detail in the fading dream of his infancy. The two most real persons in the world he faced, as he descended the Pro-Cathedral's steps, were Father Tudor and that Frenchman. That Frenchman who had won his confidence by his instinctive faith in the goodness of Father Innocent. The two had never met, and yet by some mystic succession it seemed to him just then that possibly some scrap of the little priest's mantle had fallen on the tall musician's shoulders. Adam recalled his last words, spoken there on this very pavement, as he turned to remount the car last night, "You know that thirty steps upwards will carry you out of any trouble at St. George's Place."

Adam found it too painful to return home the way he had come, the way he had walked with beloved Father Innocent last night. He turned into Sackville Street and then north. Outside the Gresham Hotel he saw Patsy Doyle, grown a big fellow now, selling the



early papers. Adam's eyes moistened. "Father Innocent," said he, and was unable to go on.

Patsy nodded, also touched. "I seen it in the *Telegraph*. There's going to be an inquest."

Adam's blood chilled horribly. "An inquest. Was he murdered?"

"I shouldn't wonder," said Patsy. "There's fellows there would do it out of spite. He was worth the lot of them put together. He got me out of a scrape many a time, and I'm not the only one, I can tell you."

"I know you're not," said Adam. "He was everything in the world to me."

"Oh, cheese it," cried his unsentimental friend. "The world's a hell of a size." He added, "I'm not denying, mind you, that old Feeley was the best thing in it as far as I know."

Adam bought a *Telegraph* from him. That is to say he presented Adam with a *Telegraph* and Adam presented him with a threepenny bit and he said, "Thank you, Mac, and God bless you." Then they parted affectionately as they had ever done since they worked side by side, though, from the time of his going to Belvedere, Adam rarely passed that way on foot, for fear of his new dignity being compromised by the less discreet of his old companions who were not above throwing mud at his fine clothes or blackmailing him. But Patsy was always the same: coarser in language than in thought and making no distinction between the new Adam and the old except that he waited always for Adam to give the first sign of recognition. "You're going one way

and I another," he explained. "You needn't tell me when you want to say good-by."

As he walked along towards Rutland Square Adam read the paragraph in the paper pointed out to him:—

### SUDDEN DEATH OF A PRIEST

"We regret to announce that Father Innocent Feeley, of the Pro-Cathedral, Marlborough Street, was found dead in his apartment this morning. The body was discovered at an early hour, lying on the floor with the arms outstretched. His Reverence had been in failing health for a long time past, but no immediate cause has been assigned for his decease. It is possible than an inquest may be called for."

To Adam it seemed that the priest had surely been murdered. He almost imagined that Father Tudor might have done it. He never doubted the Jesuit's will to slay any one who opposed him. He regarded him as a non-moral creature, just as Dr. Hillington-Ryde regarded Mr. Sergeant Macfie. Probably both were right in their suspicions, but, happily, human justice with all its imperfections has reached sufficient mechanical efficiency to deter our Tudors and Macfies from extirpating those whom they honor with their enmity. No man's hand had been raised against Father Innocent. Father Tudor was too self-centered to be aware of his existence beyond a belief that that clever young scoundrel Macfadden had been pampered and spoiled for the purposes

of Father Tudor by some old woman disguised as a Catholic curate. To Father Tudor the Pro-Cathedral was almost as ridiculous as to that Frenchman. It was a contemptible compromise between their opposing views. But that Frenchman could understand and appreciate Father Innocent, for he was not, like Father Tudor, a fanatic.

To Adam, however, the question of how Father Innocent met his death seemed of no weight compared with the overwhelming fact that he was dead, and his mind was divided between two thoughts: regret that he himself had not died, to be spared this crushing sense of loss, and gladness that he had seen Father Innocent and justified himself to him, and received the last assurance of his love. He wondered if he suffered himself to be caught under one of those great trams that came swishing down into Rutland Square past Findlater's Church, whether the next moment he would find St. Innocent's hands stretched out to him through the gates of heaven. He looked skywards, half hopeful of a portent, but none had come when he turned into Hardwick Street and left the trams behind. He thought the white pillars of St. George's Church looked gracious and even benign as they closed the perspective of the dingy street. He thought it more beautiful than the façade of Gardiner's Street, but, inside, he understood, no Protestant Church was to be compared for beauty with the lowliest Catholic one. He believed it to be a mortal sin to enter a Protestant church. To do so was to endanger your faith; for there might be some one waiting

there in the gloom to spring on you and proselytize you before you could call your Angel Guardian to your help. He had a notion that his Angel Guardian, him or herself, would think twice before risking his or her faith in a Protestant church.

From the steeple rang forth the four quarters as he looked at it. He could not see the hands of the clock but the hour bell tolled forth five resonant strokes. Dublin was lighting up for the night. That Frenchman's window was open and when the resonance of the bells had died away, Adam could hear the clear, fine notes of his piano drifting faintly to the street. He heard them still after *Attracta* had opened the door, and he ascended to his own room. They did not cease until Adam, after long hesitation ascended the thirty steps and tapped gently.

"*Herrein*," called that Frenchman, in a voice which struck Adam as incredibly youthful, but, as he had no idea what the word meant, he knocked again. This time that Frenchman himself flung open the door, his eye traveled down from the level of his shoulder until it rested on Adam's face. "Ach, you," he cried, with outstretched hand. "Come in, come in, did I not call to you to come in."

"I heard you say something," Adam declared, "but I didn't think you said 'come in.'"

That Frenchman's face was hardly to be seen in the darkness of the room as he returned, "Ah, perhaps not. I was far away in the land of Bach as you knocked. Perhaps I did not say 'come in.' I have so few visitors

here. I thought I said come in, but, perhaps I said something else. You see I am very old. I am not certain always what I say. Come here and sit down by the fire. You do not mind the darkness. It rests the eyes, eh? It allows one to think. Miss Gannon's walls are excellent as Miss Gannon herself, but I do not want always to see them. I prefer to look into the fire or up to the sky or even down upon that little church, though this is not the best view of it. I prefer sometimes to look into my own memory rather than on Miss Gannon's excellent walls."

"Are you older than Mr. Murphy?" Adam broached the great question.

"The great Mr. Murphy of the trams?" came the other's voice through the shadows. "Guilelmus Martinus Contractor, you mean? We are much of an age, I fancy."

"I mean Mr. Murphy downstairs," said Adam.

"Oh, that," said his host. "I have no idea what age that has. Such men are born senile. Bacchus is ever young and fair, but Silenus was always old and ugly. The thing downstairs is not even a Silenus. He is nothing. He was not born but aborted. Perhaps he can give you the date of that catastrophe. I was born in 1848."

"Ah," said Adam, pleased with his own cleverness. "That was the year after Daniel O'Connell died."

"So much the better for Daniel O'Connell," that Frenchman declared. "He would not have enjoyed the year 1848. There was too great a wind blowing in Europe that year. It blew Metternich away. Daniel

O'Connell was at heart no better than Metternich, though he had a greater genius."

Adam had never heard of Metternich. For him, and those educated under the Intermediate Act, it was General the Duke of Wellington, feebly assisted by Sergeant-Major Blücher, who made an end of Bonaparte and all his cuirassiers. The world of history was a box of soldiers and a jigsaw map. Nothing happened there for any of the reasons they saw operating in the world around them. In the history books, any one who opposed the Government, since the Act of Settlement, was a villain. In real life he was a hero. It was only in Greek and Roman history that you read of any person for whom you could feel a liking. In ancient times you were allowed to admire the Gracchi, who stood for some sort of liberty and justice. In modern times, you were called upon to admire thieving, hectoring General Clive, who could not tolerate even himself. It was queer to think of the changes Christianity had made in the world. It was of no use to ask any one at Belvedere how it was that this great improvement had made things so much worse. No doubt there were men like Father Tudor, long ago in Greece. He would make you prefer to have a fox eat your inside, rather than listen to his mere talk. Still, the notion you got of Greece was that people there had some sort of reason for what they did. Father Tudor and his Mr. O'Meagher had none. He did not think they would have done well in Athens at all events. All that was tiring to think about. It was very dark in that room. Just the glimpse of sky outside and the firelight

flickering in a few picture glasses and glowing on the hearth. It was warm and cozy. He suppressed a yawn to hear the Frenchman say "Metternich and O'Connell are dead. We are alive. What is your news?"

Adam answered, "Father Feeley's dead too."

Then that Frenchman said, "Ach, Liebchen. Es thut mir sehr leid." Words that Adam supposed must be French and sounded so infinitely kind and tender that he unaccountably found himself sitting on his host's knee, crying out his heart against his shoulder. The first full flood of his passionate, hopeless regret for the one person who certain sure had ever loved him up till then, when the last of his most sensitive years was running to an end.

But for Father Innocent, Adam had just been any little blackguard boy in Dublin, selling papers, and Adam, for all his vanity, knew. And, perhaps, but for that Frenchman, he might, after all, have fallen back into the ranks of little blackguard boys or grown up to be such a gentleman as his godfather Mr. O'Toole. That, however, was a possibility he did not foresee. He only knew, as he sat on that Frenchman's lap, that he was at once more like and more unlike Father Innocent than any other person he had ever met. He was wondering whether by any strange concatenation of events, that Frenchman could possibly have been Father Innocent's father, forgetting that that promising jurist lay buried at Glasnevin; while that Frenchman had taken it for granted that Adam was in all likelihood Father Innocent's son.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### ADAM BECOMES A MAN OF THE WORLD

THERE followed a most unlooked for evening; for Adam's new friend was not one of those who hold that youth or age is comforted by an insistence on the dismal. "Your friend is dead," said he in effect. "Nothing that you will do can ever bring him back to this world. You, yourself, believe that he is far happier in that other world he knew how to describe in a manner you find so agreeable, that you wish to go there yourself. Let us then rejoice over his happiness. The regret you feel is natural, but purely selfish and therefore displeasing to him. So away with it! We spend the evening together, you and I, and cheer each other up against the misfortune of remaining upon earth."

So Adam went down to his room and washed, and put on his Sunday clothes, and then he and the musician left the house together for the first time. Attracta, bringing in Mr. Murphy's dinner, to be eaten in solitary grandeur, while Miss Gannon shared her nephew's below, stared at the pair of them. "Does the mistress know you're going out?" she asked Adam in a shocked voice.

That Frenchman answered, "Know you not that our mistress is omniscient?" and the door closed behind



them. Adam felt that he was a dashing sort of fellow.

They walked down Hardwick Street and caught a tram, from the roof of which they did not descend until they had reached the top of Dawson Street. They walked past the Shelbourne Hotel, where Adam had not ventured since his signal defeat so long ago by the police. Then they crossed the road and broke fresh ground. . . . That Frenchman did something that Adam hardly thought possible. He went up to a door of an ordinary private house, of such a kind as Lady Bland lived in, and opened it by simply turning the door-handle. He bowed Adam in, a remarkable ceremony in itself, and closed the door behind him. They were in a hall in no way different from any other halls Adam had glimpsed from the street. A few hats and coats hung on pegs. A clock pointed to twenty minutes past six. There was a clatter of knives and forks. At the top of a flight of stairs stood a bony, pleasant gentleman, with a black mustache, in full evening dress, talking to a tall gentleman with a fair mustache and pink, round cheeks and no apparent bones, dressed in a compromise, Adam thought, between the costumes of a waiter and a railway porter, though he obviously did not follow either of these vocations. He said to him, "Thank you, Tinkler. The Marchesa says that will be tophole." Adam assured himself that he dreamed, and this impression was startlingly confirmed by the bony gentleman's next sentence. "Tell me, Tinkler, how is Lady Bland?"

"Well, you know, you know," said Mr. Tinkler. "You know what Sir Adolphus is."

Adam knew then that he was not dreaming for he could not dream such an absurd answer to the question, "How is Lady Bland?" But the bony man did not treat it as absurd. He said, "By Jove, Adolphus is an old belcher, isn't he? All the chaps in my office want to put his head in a bucket. But Lady Bland's not a bad old buzzard."

"To me," said Mr. Tinkler. "To me, she is one of the noblest, noblest and most beautiful figures of our time. Nobody, nobody knows, what she suffers from that man, that man."

"If it's worse than what she told my wife," declared the bony man heartily, "Old Adolphus deserves to be skiboshed, but I suppose she takes it out of the old sinner in curtain lectures and all that sort of deviltry."

Adam saw that Mr. Tinkler found this suggestion unpalatable, but he did not hear his reply; for his host, who had been busy reading a letter, taken from a green cloth board, the only thing in the hall Adam did not expect to see there, said, "Come, Mr. Macfadden. You will eat a little dinner with me," and led him upstairs. Passing the bony gentleman he said, "It is permitted, Willy, is it not, to have young people upstairs on Saturday nights?"

To which the bony gentleman answered, "Of course, dear old thing, any time. Only too glad to find some one to pay for a meal. But it's up to you to see the Marchesa doesn't kidnap him for her Infant Druids. There are two of them going to do an ancient Irish sword dance on bayonets captured from the R.I.C. I

told her that sort of thing might offend Leaper-Carahar and some of the fellows from my office, but she says any one who can't keep their politics apart from their artistic feelings had better resign from the club. I don't know what the hell to do about it, old chap. I wish you'd speak to her."

"The Marchesa is a very beautiful and very interesting lady," the musician answered, "but I fear to engage her in conversation lest she should compel even me to become an Infant Druid. I have told her I am many years her senior."

"You older than the Marchesa!" said Willy. "Gosh, no. Not a day. Why, she was at school with Lady Bland. Rum old birds both of them, with all respect to our friend Tinkler."

Adam was enchanted by these scraps of conversation, though bewildered to find that the converse of high life differed mainly in its accentuation from that to which he had been accustomed. He had found already that the talk of the young gentlemen at Belvedere, when they spoke among themselves, was hardly to be distinguished from the talk of his old companions outside the Gresham Hotel, except that there was more about football and less about food. In the room which they now entered the talk was largely about food, but then the people were eating, so that was natural enough. What puzzled him was that they all appeared to be regretting that they were not eating the far better food which they said they could have found elsewhere at a lesser price.

"That soup wasn't any good at all," said a large gen-

tleman, who had just emptied his plate and taken up a card from the table.

"I agree with you for once, Mr. Leaper-Carahar," said an old lady, with a voice that would have been pleasant had it not been hysterical. Mr. Leaper-Carahar took no notice of her.

Adam thought it discourteous of Mr. Leaper-Carahar to take no notice of the old lady. He did not greatly care for the old lady, but he thought he liked her better than Mr. Leaper-Carahar, who said presently, "There's simply nothing I can eat at all on the menu," and then ordered something which Adam recognized on its appearance as fish. "D'you call that turbot?" he asked the plump waitress. "It looks to me like a bit of a sardine."

The old lady said, "I dare say he looks to it like a shark or a whale," and for a while Mr. Leaper-Carahar said no more, but put away the fish in his inside with the slow pomp of disdain and ordered lamb cutlets to follow.

The room was very full, and all the tables occupied, but the musician found places for himself and Adam at one where a handsome and impressive-looking personage was haranguing in Gaelic, a very short gentleman, who did not pretend to follow him but talked disjointedly with all in general. The handsome gentleman broke off to address the new-comer in French. "Ah vous voila! vous êtes de mon avis, n'est-ce pas, de toutes les nations, l'Albion est la plus perfide?"

"No nation is perfidious," answered that Frenchman.

"It is only Governments that are perfidious, and all Governments are equally so."

"If you have a nation you must have a Government," the handsome man retorted absentmindedly in English.

"And if you have a Government you must have perfidy," said the Frenchman. "Even the government of this club cannot be carried on, if I am to believe Mr. Leaper-Carahar, without all sorts of petty deceits and mental reservations."

Said the old lady, "Mr. Leaper-Carahar judges us all by himself." Mr. Leaper-Carahar merely ordered more cutlets. Adam thought him a proud man, chiefly interesting by reason of the heartiness of his appetite. His eye wandered round the room to a table where sat three girls. One of them, perhaps, was not a girl, but girlish. The other two were pretty. One of them was called Babs. He was not sure which was called Babs. He hoped it was the prettiest one. Vaguely he heard the conversation going on between that Frenchman and the imposing stranger.

"Monsieur est pessimiste," said the stranger, with withering politeness.

"Du tout," said the musician. "I am most hopeful; although a foreigner I know Dublin well enough to be aware that a little more than a hundred years ago a club of this kind would have been the scene of drunken brawls with perhaps a fatal duel once a week."

"I regret that time," protested the handsome man. "I need hardly say that I am not a drunkard nor a duelist, but I regret that time. Then Dublin was the

third city in Europe and the capital of a free country."

"Free enough for men like yourself, no doubt, who happen to be a Protestant Peer," said the musician. "But even a worse place for my friend Mr. Macfadden, than it is now, and that's a big oath."

"Who is your friend Mr. Macfadden?" asked the handsome man loftily. And, when Adam was presented to him, asked if he spoke Gælic.

"No, my lord," said Adam, trembling with ecstasy, at the honor of addressing himself to a member of the nobility and one who looked the part so well that he might have come straight from the Picture Palace. "I do not, my lord."

"Then," said his lordship, with a smile of profound contempt, "you do not deserve to be free." And he resumed his speech to the little gentleman who took refuge behind the "Late Buff" and nodded. But Adam did not care even for this peer; for, at this moment, a very brilliant lady sailed into the room and sat down with the three girls, and addressed the prettiest as "Babs, my dear," enjoining her in these words, "Babs and all of you, you simply must do something, it doesn't matter what, for the sword dance has fallen through." And then they all laughed and said, "As usual."

Psychologically this was the most astounding evening Adam had ever passed, and he found it impossible to decide whether his friend the musician, whom Miss Gannon had led him to regard as far beneath the notice of the inebriate barrister on the first floor, had really introduced him among the fine flower of the Irish aristocracy,

or merely brought him to a place where a few lunatics were gathered together. Also, he had disagreeable doubts whether the whole thing were not sprung from his own feverish imagination. Mr. Leaper-Carahar seemed to have an objective existence but he had gone out of the room and so had the old lady. But, the brilliant lady, whose beautiful daughter was called Babs, he thought too good to be true. He often did imagine things and the society of lords and ladies was not altogether excluded from his fancies. But, with him, a subjective Protestant peer would have ridden about on horseback, supported by soldiers and police, through whom Adam would have burst, lifted him off his horse, and wiped the dust with him. Or, perhaps, the swords of the escort would have simultaneously flashed in air, and transfixed with myriad wounds Adam's heart. And he would have died gracefully, singing as much as he could remember of the "Wearing of the Green." But the possibility of sitting cheek by jowl with a Protestant peer, and eating out of the same dish of potatoes had never occurred to him. That the Protestant peer should further speak Gælic and rebuke him for his inability to do so was to pulverize all his conceptions of Protestantism and the Peerage. Again, when he had heard of the Marchesa, which was the Italian, it seemed, for Marchioness, who would be the wife of the Marquis, which he had remembered to have heard his father say, might be called almost more than a duke, he had been flattered at the thought of having to resist her attempt to beguile him into her company of Infant Druids, whatever that corporation

might be. But if, as he was beginning he knew not why to suspect, that queer old lady who had attacked Mr. Leaper-Carahar, were the very Marchesa, then the upper classes were truly not what he had been led to expect.

He thought he would not have found that old lady out of place in Count Alley, for he had taken stock of her as she left the room. She was dressed like a rag-bag, with her hair floating from a hat which was all askew, over a face which, had she not been a lady, he would suspect her of not having washed this long time. Her accent was not that of a common woman yet her voice was so often raised to a scream that its refinement was almost lost. It seemed incredible that she had enjoyed the same education as Lady Bland who, although perhaps even more ridiculous, was ridiculous in such a dignified and ladylike manner that you felt no imperative need to laugh in her face any more than you felt the need to laugh in the face of that grand Protestant peer.

The peer's name was Lord Queenstown. The Marchioness was properly the Marchesa della Venasalvatica, an Italian title, but she was an Englishwoman and her father another lord whose title he could not catch. The other people he saw were mere commoners, though the large man who complained of his food, Mr. Leaper-Carahar, was a C.B. The bony gentleman on the stairs was not really called Willy, as he supposed, but Molly. Officially he was Mr. Robert Burns and Molly was short for Highland Mary. Adam thought it far-fetched. But Mr. Tinkler's name really was Tinkler, and nobody ever



called him anything else. He was a poet and easily took offense. Most of these details Adam learned from Mr. Burns, who joined them at their table after Lord Queenstown had gone away. Adam noticed that the handsome peer wore very curious trousers. They reminded him of Ally Sloper's umbrella. He asked Mr. Burns why Lord Queenstown wore those trousers and Mr. Burns answered, "They're not trousers at all, old lad, they're the ancient keltic bracchæ. Queenstown comes of an awfully old Irish family, the Smithwicks of Queenstown Junction, and he's frightfully keen on the family antiquities. It's lucky he's so jolly handsome or he'd look no end of a bally ass in them."

Adam liked Mr. Burns. He was particularly pleased when he called him "old lad." He called him, in response, Molly, and Mr. Burns took it all right. He was notably a gentleman, like Father Innocent, and that Frenchman, and Father Tuite, and Mr. O'Meagher of Sandy Cove. He felt less certain about the gentility of some of the people he saw that evening, but, no doubt, they were all right really, and it was his ignorance of the customs of good society that was to blame. He was glad that no one pretended to think that Lady Bland's husband was a gentleman.

Presently they heard a piano going in another room and Mr. Burns said, "That's my wife," and that Frenchman immediately paid his bill and brought Adam into that other room, that had practically no one in it but themselves and the pianist, and, the pianist Adam was thrilled to see was that brilliant lady, the mother of

Babs. He gazed upon her open-mouthed. She was really so brilliant, with sparkling eyes, hair, cheeks, teeth, lips, fingers and manners and played away grandly though no one took any notice of her except that Frenchman who stood by her side to turn over her music, to which, however, she seldom referred.

"I am just opening the ball," she explained, looking up at him archly.

"It is magnificent," he answered, as though commencing a sentence, the end of which was unnecessary. The door opened and Adam hoped it was Babs. It was not she but the next best thing, or the next best thing but one. It was her father.

Mr. Burns came in smoking. "Hallo, Lesbia," he said cheerily, adding surprisedly, "I see you're not alone. What comes next? The Marchesa has dropped the program off her bicycle and can't tell me anything except that damned sword dance."

"Don't speak so loud, dear," said Mrs. Burns, playing grandly away, for she was quite free from the affectation of the Abbé Liszt. "I'm not sure whether the sword dance has fallen through or not. Anyhow, the Infant Druids have come, dear little fellows. They are in the corner by the smoking-room door. Mr. Tinkler's looking after them. He's next on the program. Going to read either a play or a sonnet. I forget which."

"Gosh," said Mr. Burns. "Don't say it's a play."

His wife drowned the exclamation in her music and her music in her own voice. "Anyhow, do try and get some one to listen to him. He's so easily offended.

Get Miss Magrath. She wants to be on the committee, and perhaps the auditor will come if he's done with the wine account. I'm sure he can't make head nor tail of it. And why isn't Babs here and Miss Macfie? And then there's Lord Queenstown. He used to be a member of the Cork Literary Society. Anyhow, put one or two of the maids behind the folding doors to clap. I'll go on playing till you come back." As he reached the door she called after him, "Oh, and try if you can't get Mrs. Ahearn. She'll be on after that anyhow. You might tell her that. I suppose it's no use asking Mr. Leaper-Carahar."

"No earthly," said Mr. Burns. "He'd see Tinkler damned first."

Mrs. Burns sighed brilliantly. "You men, you men!" and dashed from one end of the keyboard to the other. "Anyhow, I'll go on playing until you find some one."

Mrs. Burns never allowed her fingers an idle moment while she talked, nor her tongue an idle moment while she played. They were rivals in the display of her accomplishments. When she came to what ought to have been the end of one of the pieces on the music stand that Frenchman forcibly, though most courteously restrained her from further violence to the piano. "But I promised Molly to go on until some one came," she protested with a brilliant pout.

"Some promises are unconscionable," that Frenchman answered. "It may be that no one will ever come."

Mrs. Burns looked alarmed. "It would be dreadful if the concert fell through. I don't so much mind the

sword dance falling through, though I'd be sorry the dear little Druids should be disappointed." She appealed to Adam. "Wouldn't it be dreadful if the concert fell through?" But Adam was too entranced by her brilliancy to answer.

"Worse things have happened," said that Frenchman. "But if energy can save it let me try." He took her place and flung himself into a furious rendering of St. Saen's *Danse Macabre*. In a moment the club woke to life, and through all three doors members and guests filtered until the room was comfortably full.

"It is amazing the public taste in music," said that Frenchman. "You were giving them Brahms and they took no notice. I give them nonsense and in they come at once."

"Ah, but it was your touch that made all the difference," said Mrs. Burns, and Adam found her brilliant even in her modesty.

"Believe me, my dear lady, that it was not?" said that Frenchman. "There is hardly a person in this illustrious audience competent to distinguish the touch of an ostrich from that of an elephant. Some of them would believe me if I said that I had just played the *Moonlight Sonata*."

"Ah!" said the brilliant lady. "That is only because anything you said about music no one could think of questioning. If you told me you had just played the *Moonlight Sonata* I would say to myself, 'How wonderful it is, one great artist interpreting another. The music was perhaps Beethoven's, but the execution, the expres-

sion should I say, was certainly Herr Behre's. And what does it matter what Herr Behre plays so long as it is Herr Behre through whose temperament the original is passed.' I am sure that all the members of the club who understand music feel as I do."

"God forgive them," murmured Herr Behre.

Mrs. Burns turned to Adam. "You agree with me, don't you?"

"Yes, m'm," said Adam promptly, looking in her brilliant eyes, subconsciously guilty of a breach of one of these queer old things, the Ten Commandments.

Mrs. Burns did not scorn his admiration. "He looks artistic," she said. "He has lovely hair. Won't he do something?"

Mr. Behre asked sardonically, "What would you have him do?"

"Naughty," said Mrs. Burns, and thrice tapped him brilliantly with her fan. "I mean isn't he an infant prodigy?"

That Frenchman turned to Adam. "Mr. Macfadden, Mrs. Burns would know if you can sword dance?"

Adam shook his head and regretted that he had never had a sword in his hand, much less beneath his feet.

"But you can do something," Mrs. Burns insisted. "Can't you sing, or do a little thought reading, or recite, or conjuring tricks, or palmistry, or tell stories, or something? Why isn't Babs here? I'm sure she'd think of something you could do together."

Herr Behre coughed. "It is not impossible." But Adam was overwhelmed with confused joy at the thought of

Babs, the daughter of this brilliant woman, deigning to think of something that they might do together. Then, carried on a wave of glory, he answered, "I can recite."

The words were scarcely spoken. He did not think they were audible, but Mrs. Burns caught them and caught him by the hand and landed him into the middle of the room. Mr. O'Fallon will recite," she said in her most brilliant voice. Adam was conscious of a hush, emphasized by a Giggle from the Infant Druids. "What will you recite, Mr. O'Fallon?"

At this moment Babs came in and seemed amused to find him in the grasp of her mother. He said very faintly, "La Belle Dame Sans Merci."

"Oh, how perfectly lovely!" cried Mrs. Burns. "He's going to recite 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci,' by Browning, you know, or is it Blake? That period. Everything is a question of period. Please go on, Mr. O'Fallon, or would you like some coffee first, while Mr. Tinkler reads his play?"

With the eyes of Babs upon him Adam was not going to yield his pride of place to any Mr. Tinkler. Although the Marchioness could be heard at the other end of the room, demanding if any one had seen a pair of sword bayonets, and others persistently asked each other whether they had seen a pair of scissors, he plunged into his recitation, delivering it with the same vigor that he had learned from Mr. Flood to throw into "Saul's Address" and "My Old Arm-chair," and mispronouncing so many words that several passages sounded gibberish even to himself. But, with all such a basic note of

conviction, that he really was a Knight at Arms and suffering the inconvenience of an unfortunate love affair, that his polite bow at the end called forth a rapturous storm of applause. Several pretty ladies, at least they seemed very pretty at that moment, called him a "duck," and Babs said something of the kind and her mother said all sorts of things, and more than one gentleman said, "It wasn't at all bad for that sort of thing, better than Tinkler anyhow." The only note of opposition came from Mr. Leaper-Carahar, C.B., who maintained, without advancing any argument, that he ought to have his ears boxed. While the Marchesa dramatically took him in her arms, kissed him, and declared he must be an Infant Druid.

She would have forced him by sheer strength of will, supported by the knowledge that her father was the Earl of Derrydown, to join in the sword dance, then and there, only, fortunately, the search for the weapons proved fruitless and that item of the program was finally abandoned.

Meanwhile, Adam was entranced to hear Babs Burns sing some old ballads, unfortunately not very well, to an audience that was little less than that which had listened to himself. Then Mr. Tinkler read three sonnets to Herr Behre, Mrs. Burns, the Infant Druids, Mrs. Ahearn, and the auditor. And then Mrs. Ahern accompanied by Mrs. Burns, sang the Jewel Song from Faust, to Herr Behre, the Infant Druids, Mr. Tinkler and the auditor. Then Mr. Leaper-Carahar, C.B., sang "On the Road to Mandalay," with a strong Rathmines Cockney

accent, and then a Mr. Porphyro Smith-Pink recited, "Who Fears to Speak of Ninety-Eight?" to a practically empty room, and then the Marchesa sang a ballad of her own composition, unaccompanied, which seemed to be an agreed signal for the company to go home as only Mrs. Burns, Herr Behre, Adam, and the Infant Druids who were asleep, remained to the end of it.

And then, while the Marchesa was looking for a copy of Mangan's poems, on which to swear Adam in, as a member of the Dark Rosaleen or Mountjoy Ward Branch of her Infant Druids, Herr Behre seized his opportunity to take him away.

"It has been such a delightful evening," said Mrs. Burns, her brilliancy little, if at all, fatigued. "Do come again." She kissed Adam and he looked round sleepily if Babs might be there to kiss him too, but found her engrossed by Mr. Leaper-Carahar. Too sleepy to be jealous, he tumbled into a cab at the door, and, reaching St. George's Place, had to be undressed and put to bed by his host of the evening, vaguely conscious all the while of a running argument between him and Miss Gannon.

He was wakened in the smallest hours by the poignant thought that Father Innocent was dead. Then, consoled by the feeling that he himself was tremendously alive, he fell asleep again. St. George's bells rang three o'clock. Father Innocent had been dead twenty-four hours.



## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE LAST OF FATHER INNOCENT

ADAM'S young instinct for the fitness of things called him out of bed in good time on the Sunday morning, though it was the beginning of a leonine March. Had Father Innocent lived he would have been going to communicate at eight o'clock mass and, although Father Innocent was dead, and, as he had made no confession, he could not communicate, he decided to go to that mass all the same. So off he went, bolting downstairs to avoid Miss Gannon, until he came back to breakfast. He saw no one he knew at that early hour, save Dr. Hillingdon-Ryde on his bicycle in Gardiner's Place, and regained St. George's Place by a quarter to nine, rather pleased with himself and very hungry. But breakfast was not to be had without a battle; for Attracta opening the door said, "The mistress said you were to go into Mr. Gannon's parlor and wait there until she came to you."

Adam was not going to tolerate from Miss Gannon what he would rather drown himself than suffer from Father Tudor. "Tell Miss Gannon I'll wait five minutes," said he. While Attracta departed with a dismayed grin he entered Mr. Gannon's sitting-room, the proprietor of which was still snoring behind the folding doors which led to his bedroom. A fire was waking in the grate and

the dry bones of the breakfast stood waiting on the table, with a copy of the *Sunday Herald* on a plate. Adam made himself cozy by the fire and opened it to see if there was anything more in it about Father Innocent.

There was an article written by some one who described him as "The only surviving son of the late Mr. Feeley, who was already a famous solicitor in Brunswick Street, when cut off at the same early age of forty-five as his only learned and sanctified surviving son." There was a reference to Mrs. O'Meagher as "the deceased's sister married to a prominent citizen of Sandy Cove, formerly a member of the Gaelic League and recently released from Mountjoy Prison, all of whose children are destined for the religious life, illuminated by their learned and sanctified uncle, whose inimitable eloquence in the pulpit we are not likely to see equaled or surpassed in our time." The whole ended with this statement, "Although there were no suspicious circumstances whatever, connected with the death of the unfortunate and learned priest, which was the result of an obvious misapprehension on his part, the coroner has decided that in the absence of natural causes, as certified by a registered medical practitioner, it will be regrettably desirable for him to hold a purely formal inquest. The funeral will take place at Glasnevin Cemetery at eleven a.m. on Tuesday morning."

That was the last Adam read of Father Innocent in a public print and it dashed his good spirits; not only because of Father Innocent but because of Josephine,

the account of whose death he might one day be reading thus. Did the children of people who died young, die young too? How old was Mrs. O'Meagher? His own father was forty-nine when he met his end. Would he have lived much longer if he hadn't fallen downstairs when he was drunk? And his mother, how old was she? He didn't want to die young even to be with Father Innocent in heaven. He would rather be in that queer place in Stephen's Green, reciting "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" to pretty ladies who called him a duck. He had a notion that in heaven the lady angels were very reserved in their language. They had to be for fear of making God jealous. Heaven was a dull sort of place. He would rather be with Babs Burns or her mother in Stephen's Green than with Father Innocent in heaven. Father Innocent liked heaven, no doubt, but his taste was austere. He liked the Botanic Gardens and described Glasnevin Cemetery as if it were an earthly paradise. Adam thought it a beastly hole. He shuddered at the thought of it. Still he would go to Father Innocent's funeral. Eleven o'clock on Tuesday morning.

St. George's bells rang nine o'clock. Miss Gannon's five minutes were gone twice over. She was trying it on. Adam was not going to stand that even though hungry for breakfast. He put the paper, refolded neatly, back on Mr. Gannon's plate and quietly, though undisguisedly, left the room and ascended to his bedroom. He was within a step of his landing when he heard his landlady call shrilly from below, "Adam Macfadden, Adam Macfadden." Adam leaned over the banister to

answer, with a fair self-possession, "Well, Miss Gannon, what is it?"

He heard her run up some few steps in her irritation before she cried again, "Didn't that girl give you my message to wait downstairs till I could come to you?"

"She did," Adam said. "Didn't she give you mine, that I'd wait five minutes?"

Miss Gannon's rising fury carried her to the top of the first flight. "D'you think she'd have the impudence to give me such a message?"

"I didn't think about it at all," said Adam, his tone and heart both hardening. "I know I waited fully ten minutes and gave you every chance."

"Arrah! and what are you talking about?" screamed Miss Gannon, taking the second flight of the stairs at a rush and speaking now from the first-floor landing. "D'you think I'm going to take impudence from you in my own house?"

"We need not discuss that," said Adam, more pleased with the hauteur of his own language than offended by the lowness of hers. "Will you please to let me have my breakfast?"

As he turned and shut his door Miss Gannon either shrieked or laughed, in the manner of a hyena; and, with admirable élan for a lady of her years, scaled the two flights of stairs and charged through Adam's door. In an instant she had Adam's left ear between her right finger and thumb, and she was spitting out the words, "I'll learn you to give me impudence, you little bastard!"

Poor Miss Gannon had momentarily forgotten herself or she certainly would not have used this term. Quite apart from the physical anguish in his ear, she made Adam see red and her shy, facial beauty ran an instant's risk of being obliterated. But he well knew how to repulse irate females, without causing them grievous bodily harm, and he knew that Father Innocent would not like him to hurt Miss Gannon, or any woman; so he just put his right heel smartly behind hers, chucking her the while under her chin, and Miss Gannon was horrified to find herself rolling backwards on Adam's bed, giving him an ample opportunity to admire her legs, had he been in a mood to do so.

But Adam was preoccupied with his ear, which bled freely, when Herr Behre appeared. He gazed sternly from Adam to Miss Gannon, then said, "I hope I do not intrude."

Miss Gannon had scarcely presence of mind to cover her ankles before answering hysterically, "He assaulted and battered me."

Adam withered under the severity of Herr Behre's frown. "And on Sunday too, of all days! as Ibsen says. My dear Miss Gannon, you must leave this young gallant to me. I will see that this never occurs again. We have all made mistakes in our time. Come, Macfadden, you go with me." He pushed Adam roughly out of the door, and Adam, perplexed and crestfallen, climbed to the room above. He deemed that Frenchman really rather stupid not to see that he had neither hurt Miss Gannon or made any attempt to do so. He

was the only sufferer in the fray; for Miss Gannon had not released his ear, without leaving a deep scratch across the lobe, from which the blood had poured on to his collar and shirt, before he put his handkerchief to it, and his handkerchief was now all gules. He did not care to sit down in that Frenchman's room, but stood by the window listening to the clatter of Miss Gannon's tongue, punctuated by a soothing, "There, there," from that Frenchman.

Then he heard the latter on the landing. "No, no, my dear madam, you must not distress yourself, by telling me in detail what passed. I have imagination. The danger is over now. Boys will be boys. I will not hear another word lest you make yourself ill. Send Macfadden's breakfast up to my room . . ." Here Miss Gannon interrupted with some brief phrase which Adam took to be that she would not. That Frenchman amiably went on, "Ah, it was thoughtless of me to demand that. Your passions are still too perturbed, charming lady. Rest here, on Macfadden's bed. He will not molest you again, while I descend to the kitchen and prepare our breakfasts with your domestic."

Adam heard Miss Gannon bound out on to the landing. "No man will ever enter my kitchen," she said dramatically, as though it were a vestal if metaphorical vow.

Herr Behre answered politely, "I will if you wish it, but I have no desire. If you feel well enough to prepare them with your usual care I think the breakfasts are better left to you."

"I'm not going to give that impudent brat any breakfast," said she.

"Excuse me," said Herr Behre, and dropped his voice so that the next thing Adam heard was a surly, "We'll see," from Miss Gannon, as she descended the stairs.

That Frenchman came up to his own room with a somewhat mephistophelian smile. "She bit your ear?" he asked.

Adam, who had nerved himself for the threatened scolding, answered rather grievously, "She scratched it."

"That is perhaps not quite so dangerous," said his host, opening a small hanging cupboard, "but we'll put some boracic on it." Adam doctored and ensconced by the fire, he asked him what had happened, and the boy, grasping by this time, that his host's conduct downstairs had been purely diplomatic, answered as faithfully as he was wont to answer Father Innocent.

Herr Behre listened with twinkling eyes, but a somewhat melancholy mouth. "That is the devil of it," he declared. "We men have brutalized women for such countless ages that the few of them who have the courage to show their independence either give a feeble imitation of the silliest sort of man, or else behave like mad cows. Miss Gannon belongs to the one type and our dear Marchesa to the other."

"I prefer the Marchesa," Adam blurted.

"You might not if you depended on her for your meals," said Herr Behre dryly. "I confess I prefer poor Miss Gannon. She has made the best of her wretched opportunities, according to her miserable lights, whereas

the Marchesa has squandered many gifts of fortune in the pursuit of downright imbecilities. Not that I have a word to say against our dear Marchesa, who, according to her friend the great Macarthy, can no more help her faults than I can help mine."

Here Attracta appeared with the breakfasts. Miss Gannon justified Herr Behre's opinion of her by sending up Adam's with a little bacon as it always was on Sunday mornings, except in Lent. She was not the woman to palter in a double sense, or that Frenchman would not have remained for so many years beneath her roof. Adam found himself forgiving her the assault on his ear before he had finished his first cup of tea, but it was still smarting under the boracic, and he had no intention of risking a further offense to his dignity from Miss Gannon. He was too nearly thirteen for that.

That Frenchman perhaps read his thought, for he said, "You think you must leave here. Can you?"

Adam's heart fell, for he had not foreseen any difficulty in the matter. It was Father Innocent who had brought him there, and now that he was no longer alive, there seemed to be no reason why he should not go elsewhere. But the question arose who was to pay the piper if he danced away? Ultimate financial responsibility rested, he believed, with Father Muldoon. And Father Muldoon, he felt instinctively, would not only insist on his remaining under Miss Gannon's thumb but would surrender him to the mercies of Father Tudor. He made up his mind at once. "I'll have to go back selling papers," said he.



Herr Behre smiled at him very pleasantly. "I am glad that is your decision," said he. "So far as I can judge it is the right one. So long as you remain here you will not be safe from the nails of the good Miss Gannon, now that she has once drawn blood. But I can secure you a day or two of immunity from her until we can find out what the position of your affairs may exactly be. So far as possible we must fulfil Father Innocent's wishes, and we know he did not require you to return to Belvedere, so you may clear your mind of that nightmare. Tell me more about your friend, Father Innocent's brother-in-law. He seems to be the only serious person you know."

Adam was deep in the subject of Mr. O'Meagher and his family at Sandy Cove when Attracta, who had already cleared the breakfast things, reappeared with the announcement, that there was a gentleman below who demanded to see Adam. St. George's bells struck eleven. Miss Gannon was safe in church, but the news of the stranger below startled Adam. Was it Father Muldoon or Father Tudor himself, or an emissary from one or the other? No, it was a gentleman and not a priest. No gentleman had ever called upon him at St. George's Place. No one but Father Innocent had called there. Even the intriguing Mr. O'Toole never ventured so far, and his mother only came once or twice by ceremonial appointment.

That Frenchman marked his trepidation. "You may be sure it is a friend," he said. "Probably this Mr. O'Meagher. If so, bring him up here."

He was right. Adam rushed downstairs into the arms of Josephine's father, who greeted him nervously with the words, "Now, don't you cry, or say anything to start me off crying. I've had more than enough of that at Sandy Cove. You'd think heaven was the Black Hole of Calcutta, the way my wife's carrying on at the thought of her brother going there. I told her it was the only place a man like him was fit for. But she won't listen to reason. The truth is she thinks I've got to be damned now, because he's lost his chance of converting me, by going to heaven first. But that isn't what I came here to talk to you about. Of course Innocent's a great loss. I didn't know how much he and you were to one another until yesterday morning."

"Yesterday morning," Adam repeated, wondering how he came to hear of it then.

"Yesterday morning," Mr. O'Meagher reiterated. "You must have been the last thing in his mind, for he wrote to me about you and went out and posted the letter himself immediately before—before——" Mr. O'Meagher palpably broke down here, but turned it off by saying, "I see you've been on the tiles and got your ear scratched, or was it Father Tudor did it? Terrible man Tudor, I remember him well. He was just beginning his devilments when I was young. Stephen Macarthy's the fellow to tell you all about Father Tudor. He's kept his eye on him all these years. Quite in a friendly way, you know. Macarthy's an easy-going chap, but he's a lot deeper than you would think to look at him. Have you ever seen him at all there in College Street, drinking

tea with a face on him like an Irish Sphinx? Sometimes I think he's a very bad man. He says Gælic is a waste of time. Have you ever met him, tell me? I think you ought to meet him. He used to be a great friend of Josephine's. He found out the right sort of bottle to give her when she was a baby and you'd think she'd be grateful to him ever since. But now her mother says that it isn't right for any man, let alone a bachelor, to know a thing like that. The child was dying in her hands only for him. It's wonderful how particular babies are. Especially ladies. It isn't so much about having an elegant shape to the bottle as you'd expect, but getting it with the same sort of hole both ends. They say it makes it easier to clean. I'm sure I don't know. My wife thinks that if she buys milk from a good Catholic it's bound to be all right. She won't believe me when I tell her that cows have no religion. She thinks it blasphemy. Oh, life's not such fun at Sandy Cove as you might think, to see us playing musical chairs at Christmas."

All this Mr. O'Meagher said in the hall of St. George's Place, outside Mr. Gannon's door, between eleven and a quarter past. Adam well understood the source of his agitation and awaited patiently the opportunity to bring him upstairs. "Please, there's a friend of mine would like to meet you," he said.

"A friend of yours, certainly," replied Mr. O'Meagher. "What's his name and where is he?"

"He's upstairs," Adam answered, "and his name is Hairy Bear."

"His name is what? You're having a bit of fun

with me," the visitor protested. But on Adam explaining that the gentleman with the zoological name was a Frenchman, he slapped the side of his head and cried, "Am not I an idiot? Your friend's name is Héribert. That's as plain as a pikestaff. I've never heard of him but that will make it all the pleasanter to meet him. Remind me that I've got to talk to you about other things afterwards. In your room, is he? Where's that? You show the way."

Within two minutes he was in the front top room, presenting himself to the occupant. "My name's O'Meagher. Glad to meet you, Monsieur Héribert, seeing you're a friend of Adam's—I am afraid he has damned few."

"They will come, Mr. O'Meagher," the musician answered gravely. "They are coming already. But I cannot claim to be Monsieur Héribert. My name is Behre. Heinrich or Henrik or Hendrik, or Henry, or Harry, or Henri, or Enrico Behre, as you will."

"But Behre isn't a French name at all," said Mr. O'Meagher, "and you're no more a Frenchman than I am."

Mr. Behre bowed and smiled. "Did I claim that distinction?"

"Aren't you a German?" Mr. O'Meagher insisted.

"I do not so regard myself," said the musician.

"A bit ashamed of it," suggested Mr. O'Meagher.

Herr Behre shrugged his shoulders. "As much as I regret being near two meters high and having a red nose."

Mr. O'Meagher nodded. "You would have been an Irishman if you could?"

"Preferably," said Herr Behre, "I would not have been."

Mr. O'Meagher hummed disconsolately. "Faith, I feel like that myself. Time was I had great ideas about France."

"So had I," said the musician. "Heine, *Das Buch, Legrand*. All that sort of thing I've quite got over them."

"And I," said Mr. O'Meagher. "I like my own country best now."

"You would not," returned the other, "if she were cock of the walk."

"No," Mr. O'Meagher agreed. "I'd want to wring her blessed neck."

"My feeling," said the other. "I was born in '48."

Mr. O'Meagher looked at him agape. "The deuce you were. And I thought I was talking to a man of my own age. It's easy to see you've never had the cares of a family upon you."

The other smiled indulgently but did not pursue the subject. "Mr. Macfadden is my chief care at present," was all he said.

This brought the visitor to quick attention. "That's what I've come about. We may talk before you?"

"Unless Mr. Macfadden objects." Herr Behre glanced at him. With a lucky gesture Adam took a hand of each, saying nothing.

Mr. O'Meagher had taken the edge off his conversa-

tional fury in the hall below, and used no superfluous words in explaining the situation as he understood it. Father Innocent had written him on the Friday night to say that things had happened at Belvedere which made it impossible for Adam to remain there, and asked whether, in the event of Father Muldoon thinking it his prerogative to withhold supplies, a temporary refuge could be found for him at Sandy Cove. "And sure my wife and I would be delighted to have you for now and ever after," he declared. "But she's so distracted by poor Father Innocent's death that I can't get any sense out of her at all. Nothing can be done until after the . . . funeral anyhow."

The two men exchanged quick glances which did not escape Adam's notice.

Mr. Behre said easily, "There is no reason to trouble about that. He can remain here as long as he likes, so far as I can foresee."

"Very kind of you, Behre," said Mr. O'Meagher. "But it's not fair that you . . ."

The musician had stopped him. "In this world there is no such thing as fairness. There is content and discontent. I shall be fully content to keep him as my guest so long as he cares to stay."

"Well, that's a great weight off my mind," said Mr. O'Meagher, "though what my poor brother-in-law would make of it, I really don't know. I'll be glad when Tuesday's over."

"I'm coming to the funeral," said Adam. "I mean, if I may"

Mr. O'Meagher shrugged his shoulders. "Of course you may, if you like," said he. "But what's the good of it to you or any one else? I have to go, because there's no one else in the family to look after it, and you can't trust to the undertakers, not to put the coffin in upside down in the wrong grave. Or goodness knows what. But I'm sure poor Innocent, who was the simplest fellow on the face of the earth, as he will be beneath it, would have hated the idea of you, or any one else, wasting your time trapesing after his mortal remains to Glasnevin and, maybe, catching your death of cold in the wet grass. No, begad! He may have been, as they say, a bit mad, but he wasn't so mad as all that."

"If you think he wouldn't like me to go," said Adam, "of course I won't. But whoever said——" His eyes filled with tears as he spoke, through clenched teeth. "Who dares to say that he was mad?"

Mr. O'Meagher answered with little less bitterness. "Twenty brave boyos will be called on to say so by the city coroner to-morrow."

"Ach," said Mr. Behre in a warning voice. But Mr. O'Meagher heard only Adam asking why that should be, and went on, "Did nobody tell you that poor Innocent killed himself?"

"Killed himself!" screamed Adam.

"Oh, not intentionally," said Mr. O'Meagher. "Just out of pure holiness. He tried to eat his Rosary beads. He got down ten Hail Marys all right, but the Our Father was too much for him. Virtue rewarded. Who'll doubt it." He hit the table a sledgehammer blow with

his fist. "And here am I with my two sons, going the same way, and my daughter, my only daughter . . ." He became inarticulate and Mr. Behre, catching his eye, opened the door for him to pass out and followed him downstairs. Adam sat staring at a photograph over the mantelpiece. It represented a very plain, middle-aged woman, with the winning smile of genius transcending her dull features. Across the right-hand bottom corner ran two lines of writing.

From the hall, vaguely, came the name of Macarthy. It was repeated. Adam wondered what was being said. He also wondered what were the lines on the photograph. He went to the mantelpiece and examined it, reading in clear foreign writing, "To comrade H. B. from E. M.," and, beneath that, the one word in Mr. Behre's own writing, "Vorwärts."

Adam thought her an uncommonly plain lady, plainer than his mother, almost as plain as Miss Gannon, but more human; so human that she made him think of Caroline Brady. Yes, and of Josephine O'Meagher. Yes, and of some one else, Miss Burns, or even Mrs. Burns, or both?

And he was not yet thirteen, and Father Innocent was dead. . . . And what was the meaning of the word, "Vorwärts"?

Was it French? It did not look like it. . . . And that Frenchman was not really French, but German. It was a queer world. Not at all like what Father Innocent had led him to expect. And Father Innocent was dead. . . . He had killed himself because the world was



too queer for him. It was a terrible world, surely! But Adam rather liked the queerness of it. . . . He liked, too, the look of that word "Vorwärts." Was that German? He must learn German. Faust was a German.

When his host re-entered the room he asked him, "What does 'Vorwärts' mean?"

"For me," said Herr Behre, "it means the common ground between me and your dear dead friend. It means that I believe in God. And that is the difference between us both and the man Tudor."

"Tudor," echoed Adam, feverishly clenching his hands. "I hate him."

That Frenchman smiled indulgently. "Long before you are come to my age you will understand to pity him."

## CHAPTER XXX

### MR. MACARTHY AT HOME

WITH his teens Adam was fated to enter a world which was neither that of Marlborough Street nor Belvedere, nor was he to be allowed to fulfil his threat of rejoining the newspaper boys outside the Gresham Hotel. A week after his last appearance at Belvedere, Father Muldoon sent him a curt note demanding why he had not attended school and directing him either to do so from the following Monday, or explain his reasons. "It may be that you are under the impression that the late Father Feeley of Marlborough Street was your legal guardian, but that was not the case. I may say that I am responsible to those who are providing for your upbringing and education."

Adam submitted this communication to Herr Behre, who asked whether in cold blood, he still objected to going back to Belvedere.

Adam blanched and reddened. "I'd rather go straight away to hell. . . . Wouldn't you?"

The musician smiled. "There should I be fearful to meet our Father Tudor," he declared. "But the dilemma does not arise." He quoted Mr. O'Meagher as saying there was no question of Father Muldoon having any power over Adam, apart, perhaps, from the financial con-

trol. In law the only person who had any right to his obedience was his mother, and she had been guided by Father Innocent's advice. "The excellent Muldoon may say what he would say, but I understand that your mother never saw Father Muldoon at all, and they are mere names to one another. From what you tell me of Father Muldoon I think not he will be hurried to invite the honor of her company at Gardiner's Street, nor yet go pay a visit upon her at Pleasant Street in state."

Adam wondered why Father Muldoon should be shyer than Father Innocent about meeting Mrs. Macfadden. He supposed it must be part of his grandeur. He felt that the people who were not too grand to know him might be too grand to know his mother. He could not quite see even that strange old bird the Marchesa della Venasalvatica, settling down for a brief hour at Pleasant Street. He could not picture her in his mother's company, pleased as she had been with his. This thought did not shock him: he had no sentimental feeling about his mother. She had stifled it in his infancy. It would have distressed him to hear that she was in want, and he might not have enjoyed his meals, knowing that she starved; but he had no wish ever to see her, not even when he thought wistfully of the agreeable hours under the rafters at her house in Pleasant Street. Now that Father Innocent was dead, and he knew the manner of his death, he felt growing within him a horror of all that had been connected with his first thoughts, wherein the little priest alone had symbolised goodness, wisdom, and beauty.

By the same post which brought Father Muldoon's ultimatum came a letter from Mr. O'Meagher saying that his wife was gone to the country to find comfort with her family, "or worse," and he would be glad if Adam cared to come and cheer his loneliness at Sandy Cove. Adam jumped at the prospect, and Mr. Behre approved, but pointed out that the question of Adam's guardianship had better be settled first, lest the enemy should steal a march on them. "Mr. O'Meagher, I had hoped, would have done this, but he seems inclined to the habit of procrastination. I think the man to help us is the great Macarthy."

"The white-haired old gentleman?" Adam exclaimed. "The white-haired gentleman," declared his host. "I think Mr. O'Meagher will surely be of my opinion in that."

And Mr. O'Meagher was. So it was arranged that on the following Sunday, ere Father Muldoon's ultimatum had yet expired, Adam and his two protectors should lunch with Mr. Macarthy at his rooms in Mountjoy Square.

They were rooms of a sort Adam had never seen before: a house within a house. The outer shell was that of one of the larger dwellings on the north side of the square, on this fine March day bathed in sunshine, though a bitter east wind blew up Fitzgibbon Street, and one was glad to get off the steps under cover of the hall door. The maid who opened did not bring them upstairs: Mr. Behre waving her politely back. When they had passed the flight above the first floor, they were confronted

by an inner portal, with an electric bell which Mr. Behre just touched, and there before them stood Mr. Macarthy himself, welcoming them in. Adam thought he looked a kindly old gentleman, an elderly yet lively priest.

After that Adam's impression was one of books. The staircase walls were lined with them: the corridors, and the rooms, of course. He had never seen a bookshop so packed with books. In the room where they lunched looking out over the square, the sun shone on battalions, regiments, and brigades of them, pressed shoulder to shoulder, rank on rank, not, however, to defy, but to invite attack. Mr. Macarthy smiled, marking Adam's eyes, alive with desire, chase round and round the room. "Guess how many," he said.

"You must have over two thousand in this room," said Adam.

"Not far from five, I fancy," his host answered. "Want of space compels me to use double rows, a mortal sin to smother the dear things, but what's a poor fellow to do? I can't hang them on the ceiling or carpet the floor with them . . . . That was a good guess of yours. I congratulate you on the eye of a born librarian."

Adam flushed. Mr. Macarthy's praise seemed to him very sweet; and this although he had not thought of himself in any relationship to books save that of reading them.

"Mr. Macfadden understands everything except music," said Mr. Behre.

"Does any one understand that, except yourself?"

Mr. Macarthy returned. "And of course, fair Mrs. Burns of the Six Muses Club."

"Mischievous fellow!" Mr. Behre laughed, shaking his fist at him.

"Six muses, did you say?" Adam protested. "I thought there were nine."

"It's a common notion that there were either three or nine," Mr. Macarthy agreed, "but as Mrs. Burns made them six, and had her opinion stamped on the club note-paper, the committee did not feel justified in going to the expense of contradicting her."

"Who were her six muses?" Mr. O'Meagher inquired; "Apollo and Venus and Adonis, I take for granted, but who else?"

"Reeling, Writhing, and Fainting in Coils," said the host.

Mr. Behre laid down his knife and fork. "From whence have you such nonsense?" he demanded.

"You'll find it in the Second Prayerbook of Edward the Seventh," was Mr. Macarthy's assurance.

Mr. Behre appealed to Adam whether he ever had heard such nonsense, and Adam answered, as he thought mighty dexterously, "I think Mr. Macarthy meant the Second Prayerbook of Edward the Sixth." Whereupon the three men laughed so that he thought he had made a hit, and it was some minutes before he realized that they were merely amused by his pert simplicity. "Have I said something ridiculous?" he asked good-humoredly, despite his inward vexation, and so recovered the lost ground.

"Yes," said his host, "you have. But much may be forgiven to possibly the only Belvedere boy that ever mentioned Edward the Sixth's First or Second Catechism."

"I never read it," Adam confessed.

"Sure what call would you have to read a book like that?" murmured Mr. O'Meagher uneasily.

Mr. Macarthy shot a glance at him, "The cream of Sixteenth Century English."

Mr. O'Meagher tossed his head. "What does English matter to any one but old John Bull?"

"Of course Mr. O'Meagher has taught you Gaelic?" said Mr. Macarthy, but Adam felt that the question was not seriously meant. He said in a low voice that he had not.

Mr. Macarthy kept his eyes on or close to him. "Perhaps you feel, as so many do, that music and Gaelic, and so on, don't matter?"

"I feel music matters an awful lot, though I don't understand a bit of it," Adam answered, "and I'd like to know Gaelic to please Mr. O'Meagher."

"Which would you rather learn?" his host pursued. And Adam with some enthusiasm answered, "I'd rather learn music."

"Now why do you prefer music?" asked Mr. Macarthy, with a glance at the others.

"Because I could talk to people all over the world in music," he said, with bright eyes that grew brighter as he heard approving hands thump the table.

"Well said," cried Mr. O'Meagher. "That's poetry

for you. I won't deny the truth of that. It beats me that, when I think of the Gaelic. That's the truth."

"But it is of limited truth," said Herr Behre. "You can only talk in music to people whose knowledge of music is little greater or less than your own."

Adam's heart sank at the thought of this unforeseen difficulty. Life was far too complicated for him ever to be able to understand it. How did grown-up people manage their affairs? It was a relief to hear Mr. O'Meagher protest, "You fellows are getting beyond me. What about Adam?"

"He holds the floor," said their host. "We must study our Adam before we can help him. Otherwise we fall into the error of the well-meaning, limited Tùdor, who assumes every one to be such another secretion of Ptah as himself."

"You will not have me credit that Tudor believes in Ptah!" said Mr. Behre.

"You will not have me insist on the limitations of your humorismus," returned their host.

Mr. Behre looked at Adam, "You see he has put me in the corner for a stupid fellow. Is he not more to be feared than Tudor?"

"I can't respect even you, Behre, when you nod," said Mr. Macarthy. "But neither do I ask you to respect me. That way lies stagnation."

"I quite agree," said Mr. O'Meagher. "You have to pretend to respect acquaintances, but it destroys the value of friendship."

"No man of my temperament could have a friend he



did not respect, or keep one who was jealous of that respect," said Mr. Macarthy, adding to Adam, "Does all this chatter make you feel sleepy?"

Adam answered spiritedly, "It's only I can't follow quick enough. . . . I was just thinking . . ." he paused doubtfully.

"Go on," said Mr. Macarthy. "We're all here to learn your thoughts. Nothing interests us so much."

Encouraged by the six kind eyes focused upon him, Adam answered, "I was thinking that Father Innocent Feeley was the only friend I ever had"—he added with a wistful smile that warmed as the words passed his lips—"until to-day."

Instantly and with one motion the three men raised their glasses. "Our better friendship," said Mr. Macarthy, and the toast was drunk. Adam honored it in tea, for Father Innocent had sworn him to Temperance, and no one tempted him away.

"You have no friends of your own age?" Mr. Macarthy put the question.

Adam looked at Mr. O'Meagher. "Josephine's a lot older than me, isn't she?" he said, adding hurriedly, "And so is Patrick and Columba."

He heard Mr. Macarthy echo softly the word, "Josephine."

"They seem to me a lot younger," Mr. O'Meagher answered. "In fact, except Josephine, they might still have bottles. I never knew such boys as Patrick and Columba, they're not a bit like Josephine, and yet people tell me they take after me. . . . It's a poor compliment

either way . . .” Though his effort was to be jocose, his voice was distressed, and Mr. Macarthy broke in, “So Josephine is a friend of yours?”

“I’m thinking she is,” Mr. O’Meagher answered for him. “And a great deal more.”

“She has a rival, a Miss Brady . . . and another in Miss Burns,” said Herr Behre.

“Faith I thought he had a way with him,” muttered Mr. O’Meagher.

Mr. Macarthy seemed more than ever interested. “You’ve made no friends at Belvedere?”

Adam shook his head slowly. “No, sir. I never quarrel with any one, but there’s none there likes what I like. It isn’t that I’ve anything against the other boys, but when I try to talk to them as I’m talking to you, they turn away as if I was mad. . . . I’ve heard them say I was mad.”

“I quite understand,” said his host. “When I first went to Belvedere I remember there was a big boy called Cherry, who lived at Sidney Parade (it is always what doesn’t matter that is most memorable). He used to lie in wait for me every day and edge me up in a corner all alone to torment me with the charge of being an old-fashioned crab. Although it’s getting on to forty years since then, I’ve not yet fathomed what pleasure he derived from this. But I dare say the same sort of imbecility goes on at Belvedere to this day.”

“You may be sure it does,” said Mr. O’Meagher. “And will as long as we are governed by Dublin Castle.”

“I grant you,” Mr. Macarthy said, “it’s the sort of

thing I can imagine Leaper-Carahar doing even now."

Mr. Behre said, "The theory of education in your admirable country seems to be that boys will be imbeciles and the pedagogues' business is to change one form of imbecility for another. Things are still very bad in Germany, but hardly so bad as that."

"I think they're worse," said Mr. O'Meagher, "though I can't tell you why."

"I'll tell you why you think it," said their host. "Because as an old-fashioned patriot you think it your duty to speak of every country as inferior to your own."

"Surely that's better," Mr. O'Meagher grumbled, "than treating your own country as inferior to others?"

"I don't treat my country as inferior to any one other country," said Mr. Macarthy. "But she is obviously inferior to all the others put together. The illusion of the Sinn Feiners is the illusion of dogmatics and cranks of all kinds that they alone can read the book of life."

"I thought it was your friend Ibsen said, 'He is strongest who stands alone,'" Mr. O'Meagher retorted, with withering intent.

"I regret to confess my friend Ibsen, as you call him, was as conceited as Mr. Gladstone," Mr. Macarthy answered airily. "It is a fact, or seems to be a fact, that there are men strong enough to stand alone, and it is a great temptation to the man who thinks himself strong enough. But I am confident that he gains nothing from it."

"Except the comfort of no fools to suffer," said Mr. Behre.

"If he is to do any good, he must suffer fools gladly," Mr. Macarthy insisted.

Herr Behre sighed, "I agree."

"Nevertheless," said their host, "I apologize for allowing myself to express such downright opinions."

Mr. O'Meagher still demurred. "All the same, if you allow yourself no enthusiasm, where are you?"

"I will allow myself to tell you where without enthusiasm you need never be," Mr. Macarthy replied, "and that is in a lunatic asylum."

"After all," said Mr. O'Meagher, with the air of a plunger, "how do we know that the man in the lunatic asylum is not far wiser than ourselves. . . . What's that poem of Dowson's . . .

"Know we what dreams divine

Lift his long laughing reverie like enchanted wine

And make his melancholy germane with the stars?"

"We don't know it," said Mr. Mcarthy. "But, speaking generally, we do know that his wisdom is so violently opposed to our common sense that the two cannot rub along side by side without quarrel, and expediency demands that we control the few rather than the many. I rarely walk a mile from this house that I do not see my beloved fellow countrymen do something so repugnant to my better self that I itch to set them right; but my common sense tells me that none of my fellow

citizens, no appreciable number, would share my feelings. If I were with the Marchesa I would absolutely have to conceal from her the things which distress us both, lest she should raise a riot with worse consequences than the original evil."

"Oh, indeed the old Marchesa is quite impossible," Mr. O'Meagher cheerfully admitted. "But sure she's just out for pure divilment. I think most of us run now if we see her coming."

"I, too, am afraid of her," Herr Behre chimed in. "I dread to hurt her feelings; for I think she is, or can be, sincere. . . . Her painting had at one time some promise."

"The man she was in love with . . ." began Mr. O'Meagher.

"Which of them?" broke in Herr Behre grimly.

Their host forestalled reply by saying carelessly, "Do you mind, Adam, if we smoke?"

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE DEAD LOVER

ADAM had not been brought up to object to smoking. He was surprised at his host condescending to consult him in the matter. But more than that he was distressed at the thread of Mr. O'Meagher's conversation being cut. He thought the Marchesa an uncommonly interesting old lady. He found it queer to think she had been in love, and more than once. . . . Were old ladies as fickle as young girls? True, she must have been a young girl in the past; before he was born: the time of no aeroplanes nor railway trains, the time of Napoleon and Pontius Pilate. He tried to imagine the Marchesa as a little girl, a compound of Caroline Brady and Miss Fallon with an English accent, his notion of an English accent. He saw nothing of Josephine in the Marchesa. . . . And yet. . . . He heard his name repeated, and awoke to find the conversation turned again on himself.

The upshot of it was that Mr. Macarthy brought him over to the window and holding his chin up in the sunlight, said, as they looked in each other's eyes, "Do you feel you could trust me as you trusted Father Innocent?"

This was a startling question to come from the man Adam had hated for that he had seen a photograph of

him with Josephine sitting in his lap. But he did not recognize this white-haired, priestly personage as the man in the photograph. . . . Besides, anyhow, Josephine was going to be a nun. . . . he realized that Mr. Macarthy was taken aback by his silence. The latter went on, "I don't want you to trust me without question, of course . . . but you must trust me so far that I can trust you in turn . . . I mean, to do nothing against my wishes behind my back."

Adam drew a long breath, and then answered firmly, "I could trust you. I'm quite sure of that."

Mr. Macarthy turned to the others, "You fellows have heard what he says. Do you approve?"

Said Mr. Behre, "I have no shadow of doubt."

"I suppose it's the best thing that could happen," Mr. O'Meagher said more slowly, "though I'd have thought you were too cautious to take the risk?"

"I am interested," was Mr. Macarthy's only answer to this point. He turned to Adam again. "You clearly understand that it is a question of accepting me, a man of whom you know little or nothing, in the place of an absolute guardian, with as much control over you or more than ever your father had?"

"D'ye think you'll be able to arrange that?" asked Mr. O'Meagher.

"I think I can," said Mr. Macarthy. "If Adam tells us now definitely that he wishes it, knowing that the probable alternative will be Father Muldoon and Belvedere."

"If there was no Muldoon, I'd wish it anyhow," cried

Adam, though his decision was probably strengthened by the dread word closing the sentence.

"Very well, then," Mr. Macarthy said. "We'll get to work at once. If you, Behre, can spare the time, you might take our friend here over to the National Gallery or Harcourt Street and show him some pictures. . . . Better the National Gallery for a beginning. And don't be too severe in your criticism of the Italians. The great thing is to get his interest wakened. . . . Pictures bore you by any chance, Adam?"

"Pictures wouldn't bore me," said Adam. "At least I've seen so few. Only in the shops and some of those in the Club on Stephen's Green. . . . I couldn't rightly understand them."

"That you needn't worry about," his host declared. "Mrs. Burns is the only person who does, and she can't, or I should say will not, condescend to explain."

"Did she paint them?" Adam asked.

Mr. Macarthy shook his white head. "Nobody painted them," he said, and left it at that. "The National Gallery is the place for you, and Mr. Behre can help you there. It's three o'clock now. He will bring you back here when you're tired. We dine at seven. . . . No, it's Sunday, supper at eight. If I'm not in when you come back, just make yourselves at home."

As Adam left the room with Herr Behre he heard Mr. Macarthy at the telephone asking for Killiney 20. There was something in the sound of the voice that convinced him he had arrived at the most interesting day of his life. And yet he had thought the same thing years



ago when he heard Father Muldoon say, "Ring up . . ." he forgot the number. How completely his outlook on life had changed since then! Everything to-day wore an alluring air: he seemed to understand things that had been incomprehensible before. And to understand was to enjoy.

Nevertheless the National Gallery puzzled him, for he wanted to look at the pictures which most graphically illustrated anecdotes, whether of ancient miracles or modern slaughters, and his mentor found most of these pictures unendurable. "It is not the province of art to report the details of human folly," he would repeat. "It is the function of art to transcend our wisdom or at least to ease our mind by beauty of decoration."

This was to tell Adam something which for years to come he was unable to understand: to him the term Decorative Painting meant the painting applied to your house by an approved firm of painters and decorators: these, he knew, trenched on the domain of academic art as in the case of the Italian ceiling seascapes at Belvedere, wherein he had gone dream voyages. He supposed that any competent house painter could furnish you with the like, if you preferred them to whitewash. He liked the pictures at the National Gallery as a whole, but found Herr Behre's exegesis of them not a little boring. Perhaps any one who did not share the musician's views might have done the same.

As they came out through the portrait gallery, Herr Behre waved his hand contemptuously: "Paintings of office-boys by would-be office-boys," he cried. "Nothing

you might not see better done in any town hall in Europe. To me the most tolerable of the lot is this early portrait by our friend the Marchesa. . . . You are struck by it, eh? It goes without saying that it is not good. Every fault of the amateur. . . . But neither is it so very bad as the others, most of them, are. However poor, the work attempts to show an interesting man as seen by an interested woman. It is a document: there is some little temperament in it. And therefore it is a work of art."

Adam gazed at the portrait as he had never gazed at any picture: it represented somewhat flatly and sketchily a man of early middle age with merry eyes and a cynical mouth, jauntily leaning against what, thanks to the Marchesa's impressionism, might have been taken for the wreck of Falstaff's buck-basket, but Herr Behre suggested that it could be the car of a balloon. On the frame he read the legend: "Major Sir David Byron-Quinn, Bart., Poet, Aeronaut, and Soldier. B. Kenmare, 1847; killed in the Soudan, 1885. By Daphne Page. Presented by the Artist."

Finding him so enthralled by the picture, Mr. Behre looked from him to it and back again. "Ach!" he murmured banteringly, "I see what it is interests you. Romance, always romance. You think the baronet was a little like yourself? And so he was. But look at the date: he was a contemporary of me and the Marchesa. Older even than I, as I am older than she. And thanks to the Mahdi, or the Khalifa, or the Mad Mullah, or some such other captive of the English bow and spear, he was

Adam's eyes filled with tears at the thought he had said something foolish. "I'm sorry I don't know any better," he said.

"You needn't be sorry," said Mr. O'Meagher. "It's Mr. Macarthy is wanting in taste, not you."

"Quite so," said Mr. Macarthy.

Mr. Behre turned to him. "You think the man was not a real poet?"

"No more than Owen Meredith," said Mr. Macarthy. "His verse is just a trifle better than the Marchesa's painting. Temperament without application. The last sonnet is unique, but that doesn't make it poetry."

"The one they say he wrote the night he died?" Mr. O'Meagher asked. "Do you remember it?"

Their host nodded. "I used to repeat it twice a day; that was when I was young and knew no better."

"If there's no reason you shouldn't, I'd like to hear you say it," Mr. Behre said.

Rather tamely, as Adam felt, Mr. Macarthy spoke these lines:—

### THE LAST PENITENCE

"Here in the dark of the desert that ultimate night  
That hangs upon Africa, drowning the memory of day,  
Making Egyptian darkness itself as broad light,  
I kneel me in mystery to pray.  
Not to Osiris I turn, the sleek lord of the sun:  
Nor to old Jupiter, jovial and hotheaded god:  
Nor to Jehovah, the bilious, meanspirited one.  
I seek not a heavenly crown and I fear not the rod.

Let them ride their celestial hippogriffs over my  
corse . . .

Until my soul die, the smile of disdain shall not fade.

Not for the Gods have I a thought of remorse.

Only of him who may follow me am I afraid. . . .

If thou art he, I beg thee abject, to forgive

Him that lies dead for the folly that called thee to  
live."

There was silence as the words stilled. Adam growing  
anxious to break it, said, "That's a queer sort of  
poem. . . . Did he die after writing that?"

"Twenty-four hours after that," replied his host  
somewhat grimly. "All that was left of my cousin,  
David Byron-Quinn was the heel of one boot and the  
rim of his eyeglass."

"I forgot he was your cousin," said Mr. O'Meagher.

Herr Behre was pensive. "I don't see a man with a  
glass in his eye writing that,"

"Faith," said Mr. O'Meagher, with a little laugh, "he  
must be wishing now that he hadn't written it."

Adam protested, "But he's dead!" He made a cal-  
culation: "Thirty years."

Mr. O'Meagher's voice dropped to the sepulchral.  
"Sure what is thirty years but the smallest drop in the  
bucket of eternity!"

"Is it as much as that?" Mr. Macarthy broke in coldly  
and Adam shuddered at the thought of the uncounted  
æons that stretched away before and behind his little life.

Then he felt Mr. Macarthy's hand on his arm, and

heard his pleasant voice in his ear, "You take care of Time, my dear, and Eternity will take care of itself."

And even as he heard this, he heard also the echo of his own small voice piping through Stephen's Green the ancient news: "Bloody Battle in Kordofan. . . . Awful End of an Irish Baronet!" and he remembered, wondering the while why in all Dublin no one cared for the fate of Sir David Byron-Quinn a single copper, save one queer lady, who cared half a crown.

Now he began to understand: the queer lady had come with her bicycle out of the very house in Stephen's Green where this week he had been fated to meet and be caressed by her. She was no other than the lady with the strange Italian name . . . the Marchesa della Venasalvatica . . . born Lady Daphne Page, who once upon a time had loved the mad baronet (perhaps in the same, not very sensible, sort of way as he loved Caroline Brady) and painted the picture of him he had seen to-day in the National Gallery. . . . And as queer as the Marchesa was the National Gallery itself, with all the pictures and statues of women with no clothes on. . . . He wondered if Father Innocent had ever seen such a place. In real life you never saw women with no clothes on. . . . Yes, he had once, at Bray (almost, if not quite, by accident) at the bathing place. He had not been favorably impressed, even as a diagram he could scarcely trace the resemblance to what he had seen to-day. Life as you saw it in Art was beautiful, but not as you saw it in reality. . . . And yet Caroline's eyes and Josephine's hair, something in the carriage of both? It always trou-

bled him to think of either walking towards him. . . . Wasn't he the silly fellow to be troubled by a thing like that? . . . Perhaps once upon a time that mad Irish baronet had been troubled to see the Marchesa, that had been Daphne Page, walking towards him. . . . "She walks in beauty." . . . That was a quotation Mr. Flood, S.J., had once inadvertently let fall. . . . Had Mr. Flood seen some one walk in beauty . . . or run, maybe, as the old Marchesa perhaps once ran to her mad lover? . . . Had his mother run to Malachy Macfadden before he was born? . . . He shivered with a chill fit of loathing.

He shivered, too, to think of those miserable days of infancy when he called the death of Sir David Byron-Quinn through Stephen's Green, and the death of Queen Victoria in Sackville Street, though they seemed less hideous now than the hours at Belvedere overhung by the shadow of crazy, crafty Tudor. All that was done with now, for he felt that with Mr. Macarthy, he was safe from priest or layman's spite. Drawing a long breath of relief, he lolled back in his arm-chair the first truly pleasant seat his little body had ever rested in. For the O'Meaghers' house at Sandy Cove, though a kindly, was not a cozy one. Mrs. O'Meagher was, he was old enough to realize, a restless spirit beneath her air of tranquillity, and her very beds were too conscientious even for repose. He had only loved her house because it held Josephine, the ultimate haven of his desire.

Little hope had he ever of reaching that port, but at least he was now in a harbor of refuge where he could ride out one storm near sinking him, and in charge of

a pilot, who, he was confident, had skill and goodwill to take him as close to his Brazil as time and tide would suffer him to go.

And here for the nonce our vision of Adam fades: he melts into that infinity which to our finite eyes is gray, but radiant in the all-seeingness of God: the laughing God whose humor had decreed that Adam, called Macfadden, and his beloved Josephine should both spring from the seed of that great lover, David Byron-Quinn, whose soul had vanished in the heart of Africa and his body turned to dust strewn in the sands of Kordofan, and at certain changes of the moon whelming the desert traveler, as in life he had whelmed other voyagers, in the clip of the Simoon.

Here ends the story called *Adam of Dublin*. The author will tell another story called *Adam and Caroline*.

THE END













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